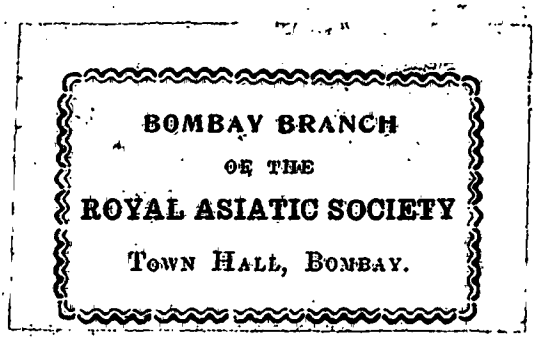

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LETTERS AND RECOLLECTIONS

OF

JULIUS AND MARY MOHL

LETTERS AND RECOLLECTIONS

OF

JULIUS AND MARY MOHL

BY

M. C. M. SIMPSON



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"Ah, pour moi, il n'y a de ruisseau qui vaille celui de la Rue du Bac"
MADAME DE STAËL

yy-d-64

LONDON
KEGAN PAUL, TRENCH & CO., 1, PATERNOSTER SQUARE
1887

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PREFACE.

SOON after the death of my dear old friend Madame Mohl, I wrote down a few reminiscences of her, which appeared in the form of an article in *Macmillan's Magazine* for September, 1883.

Her relations and friends had given me all the assistance that was possible in so short a time; they were much pleased with the little sketch when it appeared, and they earnestly desired that it might be expanded, for much had been suppressed for want of space, and that it might be put into a less ephemeral form.

Mr. Macmillan kindly gave me permission to do this. If, therefore, my readers remember to have seen some portions of this book before, I would refer them to the article and assure them that I have borrowed (without acknowledgment) only from myself.

To those who knew and loved Madame Mohl, her *salon*, of which so much has been said, was of far less interest than herself. Kind as she was in inviting us to meet the people we wished to see and to know, it was her own personality that attracted us above all others. It was not the entertaining and instructive hours spent in company with so many distinguished people that we valued most; it was the occasions when we found her alone, when she did not "receive." She would then pour out unrestrained her fund of anecdote of the days gone by, and give way to her irresistibly

droll and peculiar views of life; always, however, in spite of occasional paradox, combining them with a high tone of morality which never degenerated into commonplace.

In absence she never forgot her friends; she wrote to them continually; I have upwards of one hundred letters to myself; and as soon as it was known that I contemplated the present publication, many of her other friends were so kind as to send me letters and recollections. The difficulty has been in selection. Many of M. Mohl's letters have also been sent to me; they are full of interest, humour, and originality.

Madame Mohl wrote as she spoke, without stopping to choose her words or to reflect on the effect she was producing. She wrote upon her knee, anywhere, even while she was talking, and she seldom read over her letters before she sent them. They do not pretend, therefore, to be like Horace Walpole's, highly finished models of style; but much of the raciness and perfect naturalness of her conversation will be found in them.

The charm of manner, the cordial sympathy, the delightful way in which one saw the first gleam of a bright idea strike her mind in her expressive countenance, her merry laugh, can live only in our recollection. Even in her last years, when her mind was failing, if the right spring were touched the instrument would again give forth its melody; but these intervals were few. She was longing for rest, and we could not wish to keep her with us; yet all who loved her will never cease to feel the blank caused by the loss of the charming companion, and, above all, of the faithful, constant, and affectionate friend.

M. C. M. SIMPSON.

KENSINGTON, *February* 12, 1887.

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LETTERS AND RECOLLECTIONS

OF

JULIUS AND MARY MOHL.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY LIFE (FROM 1793 TO 1830).

Scotch and Irish extraction—Love for Cold Overton—Turbulence—Religious impressions—Madame de Staël—Miss Benger—Habits in London and Paris—Pop teas—Early admirers—Quinet—Thiers—Fauriel—Acquaintance with Manzoni and other Italian friends—Mohl arrives in Paris—Oriental studies—His visit to England—Lives with Ampère—Miss Clarke at the studios—Revolution of 1830—Early friends.

MARY CLARKE, afterwards Madame Mohl, was born in Millbank Row, Westminster, in 1793, the youngest of three children, of whom the eldest was Eleanor, Mary's only and dearly loved sister, while the second, a boy, died in infancy. On her mother's side she was of Scotch extraction. One of her ancestors, a Hay, of Hope, fought for William III. at the battle of the Boyne, she preserved the sword he wore on that occasion to the end of her life, it hung over her bed, and she prized it as a precious relic. Another Hay took part in the rebellion of the Young Pretender, and was condemned to be hanged at Carlisle. His friends knew he was to be respited, but no respite arrived, and two of them rode day and night to London to obtain the official paper from the prime minister, the Duke of Newcastle. The duke, who was well known for his absence of mind, said that there was no pardon for John

Hay, on which they begged to be allowed to search his pockets, and the pardon was there. They rode full speed back to Carlisle, and arrived just in time to save his life, for he was to have been executed that morning. He said "the bitterness of death was past."

Mary's grandparents, Captain and Mrs. David Hay, lived, as many English and Scotch did at that time, at Dunkerque, till driven thence by the gathering storm of the French Revolution.

Captain Hay died early, and his widow lived ever afterwards with their only child, who married Mr. Clarke, of Westminster, in the year 1785.

It was to her father's family that Mary owed her extraordinary vivacity: her grandfather, Andrew Clarke, was an Irishman: he left wife and family to follow the fortunes of the Stuarts, and was never heard of more; but in recognition of his services the Stuarts accorded a small pension to his son.

In the year 1791, Mrs. Clarke, who never seems to have taken root in England (her chest was delicate, and she hated the atmosphere), went with her mother and daughter to Toulouse. The Revolution was then in full swing, and they intended to return to England by sea, but did not, on account of a presentiment of Mrs. Hay—which was fortunate, for the vessel they were to have sailed in was wrecked on the Goodwin Sands. They travelled, therefore, through Paris, and little Eleanor never forgot the terrible scenes they witnessed, nor how sad it was to see the royal family in the chapel of the Tuileries, looking so melancholy after their return from Varennes, and the poor little dauphin playing in the garden.

It was not until ten years afterwards that Mary, at that time eight years old, first saw the country of her adoption. Her father never would be persuaded to leave England, and her mother suffered so much from the climate that she and

Mrs. Hay determined to live chiefly in the south of France, paying, however, long visits every year to Mr. Clarke, who kept with him his elder daughter, from whom he never would be parted, while little Mary was given up to the care of her mother.

Eleanor represented the Scotch element; she was quiet, beautiful, and dignified. When she was about twenty-two she married Mr. Frewen Turner, of Cold Overton, in Leicestershire, and Brickwall, in Sussex, a member of Parliament, who lived in the same street with Mr. and Miss Clarke, and was so much struck by Eleanor's beauty that he fell passionately in love with her at first sight, and, although thirty years older, succeeded in gaining her heart. The marriage was a very happy one, and he extended his good will to his young sister-in-law, who had for him the greatest regard and affection. Cold Overton became for her, for nearly eighty years, a second home, and she thus describes her feeling for it in a letter written in 1861 to Miss Bonham Carter:—

Cold Overton, July 12.

I have been wondering what you are all about, but not at your silence, as you have but too much to do; however, I should like to have a word about you. I came here Saturday; my sister wanted me to come over, and I am fonder of the place than I am of any place in the world, so I was glad to come once more and wander about in the groves and alleys in which I have so often gone dreaming and building castles that never were realized. I suppose I am so fond of it because the total absence of incident leaves me more leisure for my dreamy life than I ever have anywhere else, and as one can crowd more thoughts and images and events into one day of mere mental activity than in ten years one can realize, I may really say I have lived centuries in this place, and only a few years in Paris or any other. Be the reason what it may, it is impossible to express what a delicious day I had on Saturday. Having got here by nine o'clock, I had a whole year's worth of thought; but all the analyzing I am capable of could not explain to me why I enjoyed it so much.

There are but two or three servants, the carpets are up, the curtains down, all the house in *papillottes* except two rooms; the grass plots overgrown with long impertinent herbs of no name except the botanists', nettles not rare; many insurrectionary branches come against all law into one's face in the alleys; the paths are almost obliterated; some stray rose will peep out in the midst of bushes and weeds in the shrubberies; and all this makes it a place more delicious to me than the rambles about Lago Maggiore. I wonder if I *could* get tired of it! It seems impossible. All my past life comes before me with a vividness it never has in any other place; it is like reading myself over again. Unfortunately, we go Wednesday morning back to ——, a very good place; but I never know where to sit down in it somehow. I feel adrift, like a shell-fish pulled off of its rock by a violent tempest. I can't *think* there. I said to D——, who asked me where I was going, "I'm looking for a place to think in." She laughed, but she did not understand it. Pray, do you feel so in Paris? I always fancy people must feel so in a new place, yet not when they are travelling. M. Fauriel used to be so fond of ruins because of the dreamy faculty which they excited. I should think any one bred in a ruinous old solitary castle by the sea-shore, with trees, however, near, could not live to think anywhere else. I'm thankful I was not, as it is bad to be such an oyster even as I am.

By her own account Mary was a troublesome child, from her intense turbulence and *espièglerie.*

My Scotch grandmother (she writes to Lady Augusta Stanley in 1870) used to say when I was a plague, "Mary, you are as impudent as a highwayman's horse." Now, I look upon this as a valuable historical recollection, because when my grandmother was young highwaymen were so common on the roads round London that their horses were instructed to stop at the door of the stage-coach, opened by the riders, while the trembling traveller fumbled for his purse, and the horse poked his head into the carriage, poor fellow! not knowing how ill he was looked upon.

To curb this turbulence Mary was sent to school at a convent in Toulouse. She always entertained a friendly feeling for the nuns, who, however, did not succeed in

quenching her vivacity, or in influencing her religious opinions. Indeed, the atmosphere of her home was not favourable to their growth. Mrs. Hay had been intimate with Hume, and all the distinguished men in Edinburgh, she was deeply imbued with the philosophy of the eighteenth century, and it was to the introductions furnished by Hume that she and her daughter owed their first acquaintance with the rising men in France. But Mary was never an unbeliever or a republican, although she used to say, "Je me suis faite Luthérienne pour plaire à M. Mohl ; " she was faithful to the Church of her birth ; her little red-and-gold morocco-covered Prayer-book always, to the end of her life, lay on her dressing-table ; she went regularly to church when in England, and abhorred anything like profane conversation as much as she did coarseness of every kind. She was a staunch Royalist, loved our queen, revered the Orleans family, longed to see the Comte de Paris on the throne, and always said that Louis Philippe's fall was occasioned by his humanity in not choosing to fire on the people. She hated tyranny in every shape, in that of a mob as well as in the form of a despot or of a sect.

After Mr. Clarke's death, his widow and her mother left the south of France, and came with little Mary to live in Paris. One of her most lively recollections was seeing, from the back of a trooper's horse, the allies enter Paris, in 1813. The late Lord Houghton told me in June, 1885, that he had seen a sketch of the scene in some exhibition in Paris, with Madame Mohl perched on the horse behind a bold dragoon. When she was about fifteen, her mother, considering her to be wanting in conventional manners, sent her to spend a year with her sister at Cold Overton : she amused herself there considerably, riding all over the country with her brother-in-law, whose pet she became ; but although she loved her sister dearly, she said that she rejoiced when she returned to her mother and liberty. She idolized her mother, and she

often told me that her mother had the sweetest temper of any one she ever had known, and that she owed her unfailing spirits to never having been snubbed by her.

She continued, however, to pay yearly visits to England. She had always longed to see Madame de Staël, and on one of these visits she heard that the great authoress was staying at a hotel in London; so she resolved to see her, but she had no introduction, and Madame de Staël was not easily approached. It was thus that she told us how she accomplished her object:—

My dear, I happened to have a little money in my pocket, so slipped out of the house, called a coach, and ordered the man to drive me to the hotel (she was not clear as to where it was). I had heard that Madame de Staël was looking out for a governess, and I resolved to offer myself. I was shown in; Madame de Staël was there, and the brattikin (a little boy). She was *très grande dame*, very courteous, asked me to sit down, said I looked very young, and proceeded to ask me my capabilities. I agreed to everything, for I wanted to have a little talk with her. Of course I couldn't have taught him at all, I could never have been bothered with him. So at last she repeated that I was too young, and bowed me out. This was the only time I saw Madame de Staël, and I never told anybody when I got home.

In a letter to Miss Wyse, she thus describes her glimpse of London society while on a visit to Mrs. and Miss Benger:—

I think your making Paris your home a wise thing. I may be mistaken, but the habits of London appear to me dreadful compared to those here. Who can pop in in London to dinner or evening tea? The only pop tea you can have is at five; now, that is an hour to be made useful, not for play: I often catch myself, at eight or nine, wishing you would come in to the social cup. What I complain of in London is that their habits were like those in other countries when I was young. I lived some weeks with two ladies, mother and daughter,* the latter was wondrous clever. They dined at five,

* Miss Benger's portrait hung in the salon of the Rue du Bac.

drank tea at eight, and they were not out of the pale of humanity, though not fashionable. Many and many a time a young lawyer or otherwise clever man would pop in and stay an hour perhaps, to talk. This clever daughter might be about thirty, which I, being about fourteen, thought very old, yet I was a grown person—chattered like a magpie, interlarded with French. I was taken about as a curiosity to many other teas at the same hour. No doubt these were not fashionable people, but they were very cultivated and literary. Now, since that time, literary people have dwindled into the fancy of being fashionable, and it has ruined their society. No doubt these were the remains—I may say the tail—of the days when Dr. Johnson was the delight of all London at Mrs. Thrale's, the brewer's wife. It was after dinner, and not at all late—eight, nine, or ten, I suppose. Those evenings in the last century left a good long tail among people of moderate means and sociable lively brains. But being invited to a tea-party at nine was still feasible and common in 1820 to 1830; not among fashionable, but among cultivated people—lawyers, doctors, and literary folk. The ruin of this large cultivated middle-class has been the vulgar hankering for fashionable, fine, and frivolous people. What a pity they could not see that they lost all the real pleasures of society by this absurd weakness. Miss Edgeworth saw it coming on, and often attacks it with her steady good sense, but she lived long enough to see the old habits crushed and killed for ever. There's no society in London now—none, none!

Notwithstanding this sweeping denunciation, written when mind and strength were failing, she enjoyed herself immensely in London—indeed, she would not otherwise have been the very grateful person she always with truth described herself as being, for she was as much loved and appreciated here as in France.

To return, however, to her early life. When first in Paris, her life was very migratory. The three ladies took an apartment in the Rue Mélée, an old street in old Paris, which Madame Mohl loved dearly to visit and look up at the windows in later days; then in the Rue Tournon, and the Rue

du Vieux Colombier. It was not till 1820, after Mrs. Hay's death, that they went to live in the Rue Bonaparte, called at that time the Rue des Petits Augustins. Strict economy was then necessary, for Mrs. Clarke had lost a great part of her income on account of a lawsuit. She never, either here or elsewhere, attempted to form a salon until after 1838; and it was only after 1847 that Mary, as Madame Mohl, began the celebrated Friday evenings in the Rue du Bac.

Mary had many devoted admirers among the young men who visited in the Rue des Petits Augustins. One of them was Quinet, the well-known historian, from whom she preserved a whole heap of letters. Another was Thiers. When he first arrived in Paris from Marseilles to push his fortunes, he was introduced to Mrs. and Miss Clarke as to people who might help him on. "What can you do?" asked Mrs. Clarke. "Je sais manier la plume," was the reply. She introduced him to the editor of the *Constitutionnel*, and the first article he wrote was in praise of a piece of sculpture executed by a friend of Mrs. Clarke's. He was greatly attracted by Mary, and at one time took to coming every evening and staying till long past midnight. One day the porter, who had become exasperated, called out to Miss Clarke, "Mademoiselle, j'ai quelque chose à vous dire. Si ce petit étudiant qui vient ici tous les soirs ne s'en va pas avant minuit je fermerai la porte et j'irai me coucher. Il pourra dormir sous la porte cochère, ça le guérira." She never knew how deep was the impression she produced until some weeks before his death, when she met him at the Isle Adam, in the house of her friend, Madame Chevreux. She thus describes the interview in a letter written to Lady Derby in 1877:—

My friends at Stors were very busy and ardent about the elections for their department, and invited Thiers, whom they had known for eight or nine years, to come and grace the assembly of voters by his

presence on the election day—Sunday, August 5. I had not seen him since the great change in '70, or probably two or three years before. He was a different man—had lost all the vivacity that especially distinguished him. He shook hands and was civil to the electors, friendly with the candidates, but the ancient spirit I missed. As he saw me unexpectedly, he came up with something of his former warmth, and stood and sat with me most of the time while the crowd was pushing about the house and grounds. Whether our early days came back more vividly than they had ever done, when I had seen him at my house or long after had met him elsewhere, I know not, but it seemed a foreboding that it would be the last, for he was quite profuse in his remembrances of the days when he used to come every night, when I was about seventeen, and when he met the friends who used to come also every night. My dear mother spoilt me, and was hospitable to these *habitués* who made our room most nights their resting-place, to whom Thiers at that time was inferior and subordinate. He used to outstay them all, and never seemed to have enough of talk in those days. All that, indeed, was before he became a public man. I had seen him long since from time to time, and he dined with us now and then within the last twenty years, and never seemed to think of our former intimacy; but on this day all the interval was forgotten, all seemed to return, and he talked of nothing but those early days, and when he bade good-bye to M. Chevreux he said how pleased he had been to have met me once more—that it had recalled all the pleasantest days of his life. Of course his death, just a month after, now gives to this last interview a solemnity I did not think of at the time, for I was more struck with the loss of his wonderful vivacity than with the sort of serious turn that he seemed to give to our meeting.

In the following year, in spite of her friends' remonstrances, Madame Mohl insisted on going to the anniversary ceremony of his death, bearing the fatigue of standing for hours in the broiling sun.

A more serious lover in her young days was M. Auguste Sirey. To him Mary was sincerely attached, and would have married him had it not been for his early death. In old age she would tell the story with much pathos, and end by

saying, "My dear, I feel as if I were talking of some one else, it is so long ago." She drew for him a portrait, of which I have a photograph. It is pretty and piquant, but it does not recall her to me so vividly as the sketch she afterwards gave to M. Mohl when she thought he was going to India, and which forms the frontispiece to this volume.

None of the friends of that period exercised so strong and so lasting an influence over Mary's life as Claude Fauriel. He was born in 1772; was, consequently, twenty-one years older than she was. Although he died professor at the Collége de France, he began life in the army, became secretary to General Dugommier, and was afterwards attached to the staff of Fouché. His instincts were republican, and, although the excesses of the French Revolution induced him to hail Napoleon Bonaparte as a saviour, he soon found that the saviour was a tyrant in disguise. He could not endure to serve under such a chief as Fouché; he abandoned politics for literature, settled in Paris, where he became acquainted with the most distinguished members of the Société d'Auteuil. He knew a great many languages, and translated several masterpieces, besides writing some very interesting books.* He was a man full of rare and endearing qualities, enthusiastically beloved by his friends, both men and women. There appeared in the *Journal des Débats* of July, 1885, two letters written to him, one by Madame de

* In 1824 he published "Les Chants Populaires de la Grèce Moderne," and in 1833 "Les Origines des Epopées Chevaleresques;" also a history of Provençal poetry. He was devoted to the beautiful widow of the Girondist Condorcet until her death, in 1822, and he left in her hands, unknown to his contemporaries, a curious history of Bonaparte's reign. It was so outspoken that, if its existence had been suspected, it would have been destroyed and the author imprisoned. It was, therefore, not even signed, and it passed into the keeping of the Institut, with other papers of Condorcet. Its authorship was only solved in 1883, when, after the death of M. and Madame Mohl, another collection of manuscripts was bequeathed to the Institut, among which were some letters of Fauriel, and the handwriting was recognized as identical with the mysterious manuscript, which was therefore published in 1885 under the title of "Les Derniers Jours du Consulat," edited by Monsieur Lalanne.

Staël, the other by Mary Clarke; but their passionate tone does not prove anything more than ardent friendship, for those were the days of exalted sentiment and high pressure, as may be seen in the pages of "Corinne" and "Delphine," "Adolphe," "René," and a host of other novels of the period. Fauriel must have been fifty years old when Mary first knew him. He was a man of established European reputation and great talent, and she seems to have cherished for him the sort of enthusiastic devotion and reverence often felt by a young girl for a man of double her age, of superior ability and high character, by whose attention she feels flattered as well as gratified. Of marriage there never appears to have been a question. Her ideas, indeed, of love were of the most exalted kind. She thought that a woman should stand on a pedestal to be served, as she was by M. Mohl for seventeen, or, we may venture to say, for forty-six years; to step down, to lose her reserve and her dignity, was intolerable in her opinion. She shared the notions of Madame de Rambouillet, and the "Princesse de Clèves" was her favourite novel.*

When I visited Paris in the spring of 1886 I obtained, through the kindness of M. Léon Say and M. Lalanne, who showed them to me, access to the papers of Fauriel. Madame de Staël was not the only lady besides Mary Clarke who was captivated by his charm. There are numbers of letters, both from men and women, which testify to the influence he exercised, many of them in the sentimental style of the period. He was exceedingly handsome, with lovely eyes, thick curling hair, and a very bright and sweet expression, as may be seen in the life-sized portrait, drawn in chalks, by Madame Condorcet, which hangs up in the library of the Institut, one of the five branches of the Académie Française.

* A romance of the sixteenth century, written in the eighteenth, by Madame de la Fayette. It is full of tender and exalted sentiment.

Fauriel was no more than Mary Clarke's dearest and most intimate friend, and in the winter of 1823 he joined her and her mother in Switzerland, and accompanied them to Italy, where he had an invitation to spend the winter with Manzoni, who had the greatest esteem and almost reverence for Fauriel, as appears in their letters, which Madame Mohl presented, in 1880, to the Public Library of Milan.*

Mrs. and Miss Clarke established themselves in a lodging, and spent every evening with Manzoni, through whom they were admitted into the best society. From this journey may be dated Mary's love for Italy and Italian art, and some of her most lasting friendships were made at Milan—the Arconatis and their numerous clan, Trottis, Collegnos, Viscontis, Trivulzis, the Princess Belgiojoso, and many others.

It was after they returned to Paris, and again through the medium of M. Fauriel, that Mary met for the first time the man whose strong sense, great ability, lofty character, and constant affection made him the mainstay of her later life.

Julius Mohl was born at Stuttgart the 23rd October, 1800. His father was a high official in the civil service of the kingdom of Würtemberg, and his three brothers all rose to eminence in their respective branches of study—Robert, the eldest, as a jurist and liberal politician; Moritz, as a national economist; Hugo, as a botanist. The education of these four boys was carried on, as is generally the case in German families, as much at home as at school, for the German system of sending boys to a gymnasium, which is a Government day-school, throws a great deal of responsibility and actual work on the father and mother at home. As is generally the case with distinguished men, we hear that in the case of Mohl, too, his mother was a lady of a highly cultivated mind, combining a great charm of manner with force and originality of character, and devoting herself quite as much to the training of her children as to the humbler cares of her household. Julius showed early signs of love of knowledge. He finished his school career at eighteen, and went to Tübingen to study theology. Becoming dissatisfied with the

* Some of them are printed in Gubernatis' notice, "Il Manzoni ed il Fauriel."

narrow and purely theological treatment of Christianity, Hebrew proved to him, what it has proved to many scholars, a rail to slide from ecclesiastical to Oriental studies. Though in 1822 he was actually appointed to a small living, Julius Mohl felt more and more attracted by Eastern studies, and resolved in 1823 to go to Paris, where alone at that time there existed in the Collège de France a school of Oriental learning. He attended at first the lectures of De Sacy on Arabic and Persian, and of Abel Rémusat on Chinese. He did not at once, as is so much the fashion now, devote himself to one special language, but tried to become an Oriental scholar in the true sense of the word. He wished to become acquainted, as he expressed it himself at the time, "with the ideas that have ruled mankind," particularly in the earliest ages of Eastern history. He seems soon to have endeared himself to several of the leading Oriental scholars at Paris, and the society in which they moved, the charm of their manner and conversation, the largeness of their views, seem to have produced a deep impression on the mind of the young scholar, just escaped from the narrow chambers of the Tübingen seminary, and the traditional teaching of its learned professors. In 1826 the Würtemberg Government, wishing to secure the services of the promising young Orientalist, gave him a professorship of Oriental languages at Tübingen, allowing him at the same time to continue his studies at Paris. In 1830 and 1831 Mohl went to England, and here gained the friendship of several Oriental scholars, some of them servants of the old East India Company. He then seems to have conceived the plan of passing some years in India; and when he failed in this he returned to Paris, which had already become his second home.

At Paris he continued for some time his Chinese studies, and produced as their fruit his edition of a Latin translation of two of the canonical books, the "Shi-king" and "Y-king" (1830, 1837, and 1839). These translations had been made by two Jesuits, Lacharme and Régis, in the first half of the last century, but had never been published.

At the same time, Persian became more and more his *spécialité*. So early as 1826 the French Government entrusted the young German student with an edition and translation of the "Shah Nameh," the famous epic poem of Firdusi. The poem was to form part of the "Collection Orientale," a publication undertaken by

Government, and carried out in so magnificent and needlessly extravagant a style that it altogether failed in the object for which it was intended—viz. to bring to light the treasures of Eastern literature. To Mohl this undertaking became the work of his life; nay, it was not quite finished at the time of his death. In preparation for his great work he published in 1829, with Olshausen, "Fragments Relatifs à la Religion de Zoroastre." The printing of the first volume of the Persian epic began in the year 1833, and in the same year he resigned his professorship at Tübingen, where he had never lectured, and determined to settle at Paris.*

The three elder brothers Mohl came to Paris together. Robert was attached to the Würtemberg legation; Moritz went into all the economical questions of the day, and studied the manufactories of Paris and Havre; while Julius devoted himself to his Oriental studies. The great naturalist Cuvier had a very agreeable *salon*, and it was there that Julius Mohl first saw Jean Jacques Ampère, who was declaiming his verses to an admiring audience. "Anything like show-off," his niece writes, "was disagreeable to the quiet, self-contained German. Je n'en revenais pas," he said. "Yet the two men, so unlike in every respect, seem to have taken an instantaneous liking to each other, and from the year 1831 to Mohl's marriage, in 1847, they lived under the same roof (first in the Rue du Bac and afterwards in the Rue de Grenelle), and many are the amusing stories told of their *ménage*. Ampère was passionate, impulsive, demonstrative, and restless, but he shared with Mohl a childlike singleness of heart and an absolute freedom from self-interest. They both disregarded trifles, and were superior to vulgar considerations; but while Ampère's money affairs were in the utmost confusion, Mohl's were always in perfect order. He had a genius for finance, and by means of care and well-chosen investments he managed in later years their little fortune so well that

* From Max Müller's article in the *Contemporary*, for which the materials were furnished by Madame Mohl.

M. and Madame Mohl died in comparative affluence. In the *ménage* with Ampère his part was that of the careful housewife. They were fortunate in their porters, M. and Madame Félix, both of whom were characters, and devoted to their lodgers. When Ampère was ill, Madame Félix used to send him up a *tisane* of a different colour every day, "to amuse him," as she said. M. Félix had been in the army, and was fond of recounting his adventures, which Mohl wove into a narrative and read aloud to the old man, who was so moved at the recital that he burst into tears.

There was no real need on M. Mohl's part for any great privation. His parents were by no means ill off, according to the notions of Germany at that time. They held a very high social position, and gave their sons an unusually good education, travels included, for which each of the three received a certain sum; but while Robert and Moritz went back in time to Germany, Julius preferred remaining in Paris to returning to Tübingen, where the professorship of Hebrew was long kept open for him. He was too proud, however, to ask for more money from his parents, who naturally were annoyed at his abandoning his native country.

Julius Mohl attached himself with filial affection to M. Fauriel, and another lifelong friend was Dr. Roulin. These three and Ampère, when he was in Paris, spent every evening with Mrs. and Miss Clarke. "One winter," Madame Mohl told me, "they went abroad, but I would not let any one else come in the evening, lest it should *contrairy* them when they came back. I read such a number of books!"

Her love of books was intense (in a letter to her niece Ida she says, "If there were no more books, the best thing to do would be to hang one's self, for life would not be worth having"), and she was almost equally fond of art, especially Greek art. She was a thorough artist, and her taste was as accurate as it was independent. She saw in a moment

the good and the weak points in a picture or a statue. She drew for her own amusement to within a very few years of her death, and in her early days studied assiduously in the ateliers of M. Belloc and Madame Juillerat (*née* Clotilde Gérard, who taught drawing in pastels). She copied pictures in the Louvre, but only for a very short time, as she soon gave up painting in oils.

One of the friends of those days, Madame Quirins (then Miss Sophie Haughton), writes to me—

I cannot imagine whence arose that ridiculous story of the wreath of flowers which she carried in her apron to the Louvre, and put on to go to the receptions of Princess Belgiojoso. When that lady came to Paris Miss Clarke had long given up painting in the galleries, which were, besides, always shut up at four o'clock—not exactly the hour for evening dress receptions then or now. She was certainly careless in her dress, keeping very much to the fashions of her youth, but not to that ridiculous extent.

Another of the few surviving friends of those days, Miss Bostock, writes—

In January, 1830, I went with my father and mother to Paris, where we remained for two years. In 1831 Mrs. Reid came to stay with us, and we all became intimate with Mrs. and Miss Clarke. Though I was a very young girl, my recollections of the time, being mostly delightful, are very vivid, none more delightful than of Miss Clarke, so that I have her before me as distinctly as if months, instead of years, had passed meanwhile. Most of the English were frightened away by the July Revolution; those who remained, I suppose, were drawn together. I remember hearing from Mary Clarke's own lips her adventurous expedition during the fighting, and her crawling over the Pont Neuf below the parapet. She was very enthusiastic about the "three glorious days."

In the old Paris days she was quite the most amusing person I had ever seen. The extraordinary words she used in speaking English I still call to mind. My father said they were good old disused English.

To any one who knew her in 1850, I have to say that in 1830 she was just the same—her figure, her dress, her hair, her attitudes, her gestures. I am sure that the curled hair and frilled neck were not assumed oddities, but the costume of her youth in which she persevered.

The adventurous expedition to which Miss Bostock alludes was described by Miss Clarke in a very interesting and entertaining letter to M. Mohl, at that time in England.* She tells him how she walked alone from the Faubourg St. Germain to the house of her friend, Josephine, in the very thick of the fighting; how she was obliged to stay there two nights, and returned home again alone, on the Thursday morning, amid shots and rioters and barricades. Mrs. Clarke's political interests seem to have overcome her maternal anxiety, for she exclaimed on her daughter's return, "For Heaven's sake, tell me some news; I have been in agonies." "But I assured you, mamma, that I would not run any risks," replied Mary. "Oh, I was not uneasy about *you;* my anxiety was for the poor people."

Both mother and daughter were on the liberal side, and to the end of her life Madame Mohl was an enthusiastic Orleanist.

Although surrounded by delightful men-friends, it was an annoyance to Mary that scarcely any women were included in her mother's society. She seized eagerly, therefore, the opportunity for making acquaintance with her young fellow-students in Madame Juillerat's atelier; with Mademoiselle Josephine Ruotte, who became one of the most intimate friends of both M. and Madame Mohl until her death, which preceded that of Madame Mohl by only two years; with Miss Louise Swanton, the daughter of an Irish gentleman who had

* Although M. Lalanne kindly gave me a copy of the whole letter, as it is very long and most of it has already been published, want of space obliges me to suppress it.

married a French lady, and by whom Mary was especially captivated.

As a young girl (Madame Quirins writes) Miss Swanton was a perfect vision of beauty, and to the end of her life she resembled a Madonna, always keeping her beautifully cut features and placid, serene expression. The *brouille* between them seems to have been caused by the jealous attachment of Mademoiselle Adelaide Montgolfier for Miss Swanton. Deformed in person, but of a most amiable, affectionate disposition, Adelaide clung with ardent affection to her beautiful friend, sharing her literary labours, and leaving no room for any other close friendship.

To the end of her life Madame Mohl's petulance was a source of mortification and regret to herself.

I had scarcely seen any ladies (she writes in her old age to Lady William Russell), on account of the retired life my mother led, so I had no mistrust, and said everything that was uppermost when I was cross. My grandmother recommended me to turn my tongue in my mouth seven times before I spoke.

It is probable, therefore, that, as in most misunderstandings, there were faults on both sides; but in later years, when the beautiful Louise had become the wife of the artist, M. Belloc, the quarrel was made up by Miss Emma Weston, an American lady to whom Madame Mohl was much attached, and who told her that Madame Belloc had carefully preserved every note she had received from Madame Mohl, and bitterly regretted their estrangement. Madame Mohl flew to her, and they became once more united. The three old friends (M. and Madame Belloc and Madame Mohl) loved to talk once more of their early days—"quand elle était jeune," M. Belloc would say, "Mademoiselle Marie avait tant d'esprit qu'elle en donnait même aux plus bêtes." Her spirits, her *entrain*, were inconceivable. When Madame Belloc lost her husband, then over eighty, in 1866, there was no trouble spared by

Madame Mohl in helping her to settle her affairs, and to obtain a good price for the works of art she was obliged to sell, many of which Madame Mohl bought herself (her nieces remember seeing her come home in a cab laden with them), in order to return them later on to her old friend.

The day, however, was fast approaching when she was to have as many distinguished friends among women as among men. This was due in a great measure to her intimacy with Madame Récamier.

CHAPTER II.

FROM 1830 TO HER MARRIAGE IN 1847.

Acquaintance with Madame Récamier—Apartments in the Abbaye-au-Bois—Madame Récamier's circle—Ampère's account of it—M. Mohl in England—Friendship with Sir Graves Haughton—Letter on the queen's coronation—The Clarkes settle in the Rue du Bac—Miss Haughton's and Lady Verney's description of their life—Appointment given to M. Mohl on his return—He stimulates the Nineveh discoveries, and fights Botta's battles—Is naturalized a Frenchman—Visits Germany—Becomes a member of the Academy—Death of Fauriel—Grief of M. Mohl and Miss Clarke—Death of Mrs. Clarke—Her daughter returns to Paris—Letter to M. Mohl—Marriage.

IN a letter to Lady William Russell, written in 1868, Madame Mohl describes her first introduction to the charmed circle of the Abbaye-au-Bois:—

Madame Récamier inhabited three apartments in the Abbaye-au-Bois at three different times. Accuracy is lengthy and a bore, yet I will be as accurate as I can. I think it was about 1817, at her husband's second failure, that her father bought her, for her life, an apartment on the first floor, *sur la rue*, the handsomest in the whole building, and paid down 30,000 francs. The convent wanted ready money, and sold several of the exterior apartments to get it, but it was still inhabited by an old, old lady; and meantime she had a very shabby, three-cornered thing, *au troisième*, for two or three years, after which she hired one on the first floor, *entre cour et jardin*, not so handsome as her own bought one, which she let, because being over the street it was noisy. The abbaye was all the fashion from 1815 to 1830. The fine ladies with *écorné* reputations went to it to mend them; the ex-beauties retired to it, like Madame de Sablé, "on avait tout de suite de l'esprit;" but, in 1830, all priests, convents, devotion, fell a hundred per cent. In 1831 my mother had been plagued by landlords' cheating, one had taken away the staircase,

and people could only see us for three weeks by coming up a ladder. (I was edified at Cousin's agility; he was thirty-five years younger than now—so was I, even I.) I did not manage landlords in those days, so I said to my mother, "Let us try to lodge in a convent; perhaps we shall be less plagued." Two or three gentlemen—Ampère was one, who came very often to see us in the evening—were *habitués* of Madame Récamier's. She was always curious about the haunts of her *habitués*, and they had told her of this one. My mother had lost part of her lungs, was an habitual invalid, and scarcely ever went out in the evening, she was very fond of politics—a great Liberal; abhorred *la Branche aînée*. So my youth was spent at home, instead of evening amusements, balls, etc. The Young France liked an evening haunt of their own opinions, where they found also a lively young lady; besides, they were not spoiled by the fine society, who despised them. And this is the source of my intimacy with so many who are now no longer the Jeune France, and some older—such as Benjamin Constant, Lafayette, Thiers, Mignet, Cousin, Scheffer, Augustin Thierry, Carrel, Victor Hugo, Ampère, and many others, were glad to come to talk politics with my mother and nonsense with me. When two of these mentioned my mother's idea to Madame Récamier, whose apartment was at a discount now that religion was out of fashion, she said to them, "I should like to have these ladies *pour locataires;* tell them so." The rent was somewhat higher than we could afford. She sent us word that she would let it at the price we could give, so we went there in 1831. She had quite a passion for me, and used to come for the first two or three years every night, bringing all those who came to her; and, as the *salon* was large, she invited her company there, and I made tea.

Madame Récamier's health declined, and she wanted her large *salon;* so, after living at the abbaye seven years, we left it. Madame Récamier's part joined our apartment, and she joined the two together, and occupied them for the last ten years of her life. The *salon* is large, with four windows, two on the Rue de Sèvres, two on a terrace, well proportioned, with the east and south sun.

In a conversation with Mr. Senior, Madame Mohl said—

One of the most wonderful of Madame Récamier's powers was the devotion which she excited among her friends—a devotion which

did not end with herself, but could be turned at her will towards third persons. Ampère was her slave—that was little; but she made him the slave of M. de Châteaubriand, whom he disliked. For love of Madame Récamier he visited his own rival, and his preferred rival, M. de Châteaubriand, at his own hotel every day; wrote articles for him in the papers, and learned stories to amuse him. Paul David, her husband's nephew, dined with her every day for thirty years. During the last four years of her life her eyes would not permit her to read. David was a bad reader at the best, and loss of teeth—for he was of about her own age—had not improved him. David read to her every day for hours, and when he found that his bad reading annoyed her, he took lessons. It was to him that she confided the letters which she wished to be burned.

I should like to tell you a story of Ampère, only I am afraid that you will put it into your journal.

Senior. I dare say that I shall.

Madame Mohl. Well, I will run my chance. When Ampère was twenty-one and Mademoiselle Amélie was about eighteen, he used to come every day to the abbaye. Some one suggested to Madame Récamier that something might be growing up between the two young people. Madame Récamier one evening hinted to M. Ampère this suggestion. He hid his face in his hands and burst into tears. At last he said, "Ce n'est pas *elle*." Madame Récamier told me the story; she was forty-four years old when this occurred.

In Mr. Senior's journal at Tocqueville, in 1861, we find Ampère's account of the Abbaye.

"I suppose," I said to Ampère, "that nothing has ever been better than the *salon* of Madame Récamier?"

"We must distinguish," said Ampère. "As great painters have many manners, so Madame Récamier had many *salons*. When I first knew her, in 1820, her habitual dinner-party consisted of her father, her husband, Ballanche, and myself. Both her father, M. Bernard, and her husband were agreeable men. Ballanche was charming.

"Perhaps the most agreeable period was at that time of Châteaubriand's reign, when he had ceased to exact a *tête-à-tête*, and Ballanche and I were admitted at four o'clock. The most illustrious of the

partie carrée was Châteaubriand; the most amusing, Ballanche. My merit was that I was the youngest. Later in the evening Madame Mohl—Miss Clarke, as she then was—was a great resource. She is a charming mixture of French vivacity and English originality, but I think that the French element predominates. Châteaubriand, always subject to *ennui*, delighted in her. He has adopted in his books some of the words which she coined. Her French is as original as the character of her mind, very good, but more of the last than of the present century."

"Was Châteaubriand himself," I said, "agreeable?"

"Delightful," said Ampère. "Très entrain, très facile à vivre, beaucoup d'imagination et de connaissances."

"Facile à vivre?" I said. "I thought that his vanity had been difficile et exigeante."

"As a public man," said Ampère, "yes; and to a certain degree in general society. But in intimate society, when he was no longer *posing*, he was charming. The charm, however, was rather intellectual than moral.

"I remember his reading to us a part of his memoirs, in which he describes his early attachment to an English girl, his separation from her, and their meeting many years after, when she asked his protection for her son. Miss Clarke was absorbed by the story. She wanted to know what became of the young man, what Châteaubriand had been able to do for him. Châteaubriand could answer only in generals—that he had done all he could, that he had spoken to the minister. But it was evident that, even if he had really attempted to do anything for the son of his old love, he had totally forgotten the result. I do not think that he was pleased at Miss Clarke's attention and sympathy being diverted from himself.

"Later still in Madame Récamier's life, when she had become blind, and Châteaubriand deaf, and Ballanche very infirm, I had to try to amuse persons who had become almost unamusable."

"What has Ballanche written?" I asked.

"A dozen volumes," he answered. "Poetry, metaphysics—on all sorts of subjects, with pages of remarkable vigour and *finesse*, containing some of the best writing in the language, but too unequal and desultory to be worth going through."

"How wonderfully extensive," I said, "is French literature! Here is a voluminous author, some of whose writings, you say, are

among the best in the French language, yet his name, at least as an author, is scarcely known. He shines only by reflected light, and will live only because he attached himself to a remarkable man and to a remarkable woman."

M. Mohl did not share in the general admiration for Madame Récamier. His niece tells me that he thought the lady "artificial and sophisticated, and her *salon* a Vanity Fair." Everything in the nature of affectation and ostentation being so intolerable to him, one can quite understand the charm which Miss Clarke's perfect naturalness of mind and manner exercised over him from the first.

While she and her mother were settling into the Abbaye-au-Bois, Julius Mohl was in England, there was some question of his going with Sir John Malcolm to Persia; and half a century later, when I was sitting alone one evening with Madame Mohl in the Rue du Bac, she showed me the original of the picture which has been chosen as a frontispiece to this volume.* "I gave this, my dear," she said to me, "to M. Mohl when I thought he was going to the East, and I found it last autumn in his desk." She was much touched by the fidelity with which he had, unknown to her, treasured it. It is in pastels, the complexion pink and white, the eyes a light brown; it was still like her—the same innocent, childlike, yet piquant expression, the same brightness. There was no regular beauty in the features. The upper lip was long, and it was a *minois chiffonné;* but it was a very interesting face. The little ringlets were there which had now turned from brown to grey, and from grey to white. Her niece, Miss Martin, tells me that she had not been able to open the desk. She brought it to Cold Overton, at last a locksmith succeeded; and there lay the little portrait, to-

* It is now among M. Fauriel's papers at the Institut, where I have just seen it, and was again struck by its attractiveness.

gether with the letters of introduction which had been showered on M. Mohl by his English friends.

There was, however, an attraction for M. Mohl in Paris which surpassed every other.

"My uncle," Madame von Schmidt writes, "loved my aunt dearly for years before they married. Her lively wit, her childlike innocence, her kindness of heart, and her fickle temper made her so attractive to him." Many years afterwards M. Mohl was honoured by an interview with the Queen and Prince Albert at Balmoral. Her Majesty asked him why, loving Germany so much, he had given up his native country for France. He replied, "Ma foi, madame, j'étais amoureux." For eighteen years he spent every evening with her when in Paris, and when they were separated they frequently corresponded, partly in French and partly in English.

The following letter, written in 1838, contains an interesting account of our queen's coronation :—*

Grenville Street, Brunswick Square, June 29, 1838.

CHER PUPS,

I was in Westminster Abbey yesterday from five in the morning to half-past four in the afternoon. I saw the queen—who has a charming countenance—and all the dukes, and peers, and bishops, and archbishops, and all these people with crowns on their heads, and the peeresses all in diamonds, and trains held up by pages—in short, I never saw such a number of grand folks; and when I saw Wellington, I wept like a calf from tender emotion. The queen had a train twelve yards long, carried by eight pretty young ladies dressed in white, and without trains; they had wreaths of white roses on their heads, and their dresses were trimmed with white roses and green leaves. I never saw anything so pretty. They

* She always addressed him as "Pups" in her letters, probably because he was so much the younger of the three friends (M. Fauriel, Mohl, and herself); but she never spoke of him or to him except as Mr. Mohl, or "my spouse." I am very sorry that these letters and those of Madame von Schmidt have to be translated. They lose their charm in English.

were followed by eight ladies-in-waiting, who carried nothing, but who had pale-blue trains, and plumes of white feathers on their heads; their trains were carried by pages. All the peeresses had long red trains . . . in short, trains played the principal part in the ceremony. The music was splendid, and the whole thing very amusing. That robber Soult was cheered, which made me very indignant; but I was assured the reason was that we wanted to make up to him for having beaten him long ago. The Turks also were much cheered; they all looked humpbacked, as you know. I was obliged to get up at a quarter past three, and to be in the carriage at four, so as to reach the abbey at five; and we did not get home till six. I was nearly dead. I went with Miss Smirke, and I went to bed at her house directly after dinner, and slept for thirteen hours without interruption. So I am quite well to-day, but I never remember having been so tired in my life.

I have just seen Lady Byron; she looks rather prim. There is a refinement about her, but she is not pretty—the least in the world. She does not seem to me to have much natural cleverness, but to be observant and like information. She is very devout, and she seems altogether to be an honest, respectable woman, not amusing, but not stupid either. . . .

Adieu. The Princess Belgiojoso has written to ask me to breakfast this morning. I am just going there.

No signature of any kind. She never signed her letters to M. Mohl till after their marriage.

Soon after their return to Paris, Mrs. and Miss Clarke left the Abbaye-au-Bois for the apartment in the Rue du Bac, which Mary was to occupy for the rest of her life. It was a very convenient one. They had the fourth story for their kitchen, servants', and spare room—that comfortable hospitable room, with the little dressing-room, to which her English friends were so kindly welcomed. The servants' rooms were as well furnished as her own; she consulted their comfort in every way, and they were devoted to her. When I knew them, M. and Madame Mohl lived on the third floor, which consisted of two drawing-rooms divided from each

other by a glass door, a large library, a dining-room, and bedroom. The drawing-room had two large windows looking into the garden of the foreign missionaries, which was full of trees and flowering shrubs, and gave a feeling of country although it was in the midst of Paris, which formed a background to the picture, with the dome of the Invalides and spire of Ste Clotilde rising in the distance. The drawing-room was not smart in any way, but it was full of comfortable seats, not stiffly arranged, as is often the case in French houses.

It was now that Miss Clarke, having greatly extended her circle of acquaintances at the Abbaye-au-Bois, began to form a *salon* of her own. Mrs. Clarke had grown very infirm from the effects of an accident. She had broken her thigh-bone, and if it had not been for the intelligent nursing of her daughter, would never have walked again. Madame Mohl often talked to me of her anxiety, and of all the alleviations she thought of to render her mother's confinement less irksome. Foremost among them was the devotion of their friends. She never again took any active part in society, but was content to sit in the chimney corner and enjoy the amusement provided for her by her brilliant daughter.

Among the friends M. Mohl made in England, perhaps the most valuable was Sir Graves Haughton, and their intimacy continued until his death, in 1849.

His two nieces, the Miss Haughtons, settled in Paris. The elder became an invalid, and M. Mohl used to visit her every day to the end of his life. The younger, Madame Quirins, was one of the most assiduous and devoted friends of Madame Mohl from 1839 to the day of her death. She cheered her last years, and was one of the group who knelt round the bedside of their old friend, and caught the last words she whispered on earth.

Madame Quirins writes—

It was in the winter of 1839–40 that we first knew Miss Clarke. We were then mere children, and she was very kind to us. She was already settled in the Rue du Bac. In that winter, as well as in the two or three following, her receptions were very brilliant. She gave children's parties on Saturday evenings from eight to eleven, to which we were invited. The children played and danced in the large drawing-room (afterwards M. Mohl's study); the second *salon* was sacred to the older guests. The small *salon* of later years was then an aviary, which Miss Clarke had arranged with great taste to amuse her mother, a lifelong invalid, who was seldom able to leave the house. Miss Clarke's Saturday receptions were a source of great enjoyment to all her young friends, foremost among whom was Mademoiselle Marie Cornillot (now Madame de Thury), the daughter of one of her earliest friends; the presence of the distinguished company in the other room being not the least part of the pleasure. Going back to the dear old times, I remember seeing there Madame Récamier, the Princess Belgiojoso, pale with large black eyes, forming a striking contrast one evening to Lady Bulwer, who was blooming with health and beauty. A lady remarked that one looked like a living, the other like a dead, empress. Mrs. Trollope and her two sons, Thomas and Anthony, were *habitués* of Miss Clarke's *salon* for several years. Count Gonfalonieri, the Italian refugee, used to play with us at Blind-man's Buff, seeming to enjoy the fun as much as we did. Count Rossi, afterwards assassinated in Rome, and his son, a boy of twelve or thirteen, who would not dance, as he said a man should fight, and not dance. The Greek Ambassador came in magnificent national costume. The first evening he presented himself the maid told him he had made a mistake; it was not a *bal costumé*. Besides these, there were M. Moritz Mohl (always called M. Mohl *frère*), Ranke, M. Fauriel, M. Roulin, Ampère, Sir Graves Haughton, M. and Madame Paul Juillerat, M. and Madame Nicholas Tourguénieff, M. de Loménie (then quite young), M. and Madame Tastu, M. Mercier the sculptor, and a host of others.

Nearly every evening M. Mohl, M. Fauriel, and M. Roulin passed a couple of hours, from eight till ten, with Miss Clarke, and other intimate friends often dropped in. The deaths of Mrs. Clarke and M. Fauriel put an end to the delightful weekly receptions, which

were only resumed after the marriage of Miss Clarke with M. Jules Mohl, in 1847.

Soon after Mrs. and Miss Clarke were settled in the Rue du Bac, they made the acquaintance of the Nightingale family, who, with their numerous connections, continued to the end to be among their dearest friends.

Lady Verney, at that time Miss Parthenope Nightingale, gives the following sketch of her acquaintance with Madame Mohl :—

We first knew Miss Clarke in the winter of 1839–40, which we spent at Paris on our return from Italy. She took affectionately to the whole family, and was exceedingly kind to Florence and me, two young girls full of all kinds of interests, which she took the greatest pains to help. She made us acquainted with all her friends, many and notable, among them Madame Récamier. I know now, better than then, what her influence must have been thus to introduce an English family (two of them girls, who, if French, would not have appeared in society) into that jealously guarded sanctuary, the most exclusive aristocratic and literary *salon* in Paris. We were asked, even, to the reading by Châteaubriand, at the Abbaye-au-Bois, of his "Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe," which he could not wait to put forth, as he had intended when writing them, until after his death—desiring, it was said, to "escompter les louanges" he expected but hardly received. This hearing was a favour eagerly sought for by the cream of the cream of Paris society at that time. "Comment donc, madame," said Miss Clarke one night to Madame Récamier, "avez-vous fait pour avoir toujours reçu toutes les opinions chez vous, et qu'on ne s'y est jamais querellé? Comment avez-vous pu parler de manière à être si agréable à tous les partis les plus extrêmes?" "Mais vous savez que j'ai toujours fait un peu d'opposition." "Bien doucement cependant." "Non pas, et toujours un peu à tout le monde."

When Madame Récamier desired the large apartment for herself, the Clarkes moved to a "hôtel" in the Rue du Bac, in which they took very cheerful rooms, looking over the gardens of the "Missions étrangères" to the Dôme des Invalides. The rooms below were

inhabited by Châteaubriand and his wife, with whom Miss Clarke was always on most friendly terms. Here it was that we found her and her mother, and met in their *salon* the best political, literary, and scientific society of the day, including a dash of fine ladies and men of the world. Nothing could be more agreeable: everybody brought his or her best, which the hostess knew well how to extract, while her mother, a beautiful old lady, put in a word occasionally from her armchair by the fire. The little *ménage* was very comfortable, and even pretty. Elie de Beaumont the geologist, Roulin the traveller and naturalist, Cousin, Mignet, and Villemain, Guizot, De Tocqueville, Barthélemy St. Hilaire (afterwards Ministers of Foreign Affairs), Madame Tastu the poetess, and Thiers, were her constant visitors. Many years afterwards, after the Franco-German War, when Thiers was at the head of affairs, M. Mohl said to Madame Mohl before me, "Madame, why did you not marry M. Thiers instead of me, for now you would have been Queen of France?"

All the Italian refugees—Princess Belgiojoso, Madame Mojon (Bianca Milesi), Count Arrivabene, Ferrari, General Collegno (afterwards Ambassador at Paris)—frequented her *salon*; but the intimates were MM. Fauriel and Mohl. The first, great on mediæval and Provençal lore; the second, one of the first Orientalists of Europe, great at the Institut, Professor of Persian, greater still in his almost omniscient knowledge and his wise thought. These two spent every evening regularly with the Clarkes, and, as we found, assisted in doing the honours of the house. I remember how they used to help in boiling the kettle over the wood fire and the brass dogs to make the tea.

How Miss Clarke's conversation was regarded, we heard one night from Madame Tastu, who, speaking of Béranger, and how delightfully natural he was, and how he ran on for hours untired and untiring, said, "Il n'y a que lui et Mademoiselle Clarke que je puis écouter pendant des heures, et sans fatigue; qu'elle est pleine d'esprit!"

After we returned to England, Madame Mohl, when she visited her sister in Leicestershire, came to see us every year, either at Embley or at Lea Hurst, and generally stayed three weeks or a month with us: always bright, lively, and witty, without effort, very keen yet full of kindly sympathies, interested in everything (except gossip, which she could not "abide"); reading all the new books, of which there

were many, at my father's house, or, if there were none she fancied, burying herself in Montaigne, Horace Walpole, Thiébault's "Frederick the Great," etc. I can see her now, lying curled up in a great arm-chair, or in a corner of the sofa, with a large quarto on her knees. If we had a houseful, she enjoyed the people exceedingly, and took pains to make herself agreeable to everybody, small and great, young and old, alike. If we were alone, she was quite as happy with our home circle—always occupied, reading, writing, and drawing—cheerful, equable, original, but above all *true:* she never said a thing because it was the fashion of the day or the popular mode of thought, but only because she felt it. All her opinions on literature, art, poetry, politics, and philosophy were *de son cru,* not second-hand, but grown out of the stuff of which her own mind was made, cultivated as it had been by intercourse with some of the cleverest men of the day, French, German, and English.

Lady Verney continues—

There was a deeper side to her character. Her passion of affection for her friends, and her helpfulness for those who wanted help, prevented the intellectual side, which was so strong, from ever getting hard. She was a survival, almost the last, of the brilliant society which arose in Paris out of the ashes of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic despotism, and which died out again in the Franco-German War.

After his return from England, M. Mohl was appointed assistant-secretary, then secretary, and finally president of the Société Asiatique.

That society (M. Max Müller writes) was in fact his pet child through good and evil days. In his report of the year 1843, he calls attention to the first publication of Oriental cylinders by A. Cullimore, and to a similar collection then preparing under the auspices of M. Lajard, a French scholar, best known by his vast researches on the worship of Mithra, and not to be confounded with Austen Henry Layard, who will appear later on the stage. In the same year Mohl announces a more important fact. M. Botta, then French Consul at Mosul, had carried on excavations

at Nineveh, encouraged to do so by M. Mohl. M. Maury, as President of the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-lettres, tells us, "C'est surtout d'après ses indications que Botta retrouvait les restes des palais des rois de Ninive." Botta's first attempts were rewarded by the wonderful discovery of Assyrian bas-reliefs and inscriptions. Mohl, on communicating M. Botta's letters to the Asiatic Society of Paris, says, "These are the only specimens of Assyrian sculpture which have hitherto come to light, and the excavations of M. Botta will add an entirely new chapter to the history of ancient art." The French Government, justly proud of the discoveries of its consul, lost no time in securing the treasures he had found. Mohl did all he could to persuade the French authorities to give Botta the aid he required in order to continue his explorations, and he impressed on the members of the Asiatic Society the duty of publishing as many of the newly discovered inscriptions as their means would allow them. He felt, in fact, very sanguine at that time, that after the progress which Burnouf and Lassen had made in deciphering the first class of these inscriptions—namely, the Persian—the two other classes, the so-called Median and Babylonian, would soon have to surrender their secrets likewise. They were all written with the same wedge-shaped letters, and though it was easy to see that the number of independent signs, or groups of wedges, was far larger in the Median than in the Persian, and again far larger in the Babylonian than in the Median inscriptions, yet as there existed trilingual documents, and as it was known in particular that the great inscription of Behistun was repeated three times, on three different tablets, in three different alphabets, and in three different languages, it seemed but natural that after the Persian edict had been deciphered, the Median and Babylonian could offer no very formidable resistance. In this expectation M. Mohl and his friends, as we shall see, were sadly disappointed. Still every year brought some new light, and in every one of his annual addresses M. Mohl reports progress with unflagging enthusiasm.

He thus describes his difficulties in the following letters to Sir Graves Haughton:*—

* With the exception of a few letters to Lady William Russell, all M. Mohl's letters are written in English. I have allowed the occasional German idioms to remain unaltered.

Paris, May 10, 1843.

MY DEAR HAUGHTON,

I have little to tell you from here. The Oriental people are doing nothing, or fighting like dogs. The quarrel between Julien and Panthier has burnt out a little, because nobody would read any longer their bickerings. Now D—— seems to have been bit by some rabid animal, and I hear he is attacking everybody in some newspaper; but I have seen nothing of the matter, and some young nettles are growing up who want to burn themselves into notoriety. It is a ridiculous fit. P—— is at last gone mad, and is in some *maison de santé;* it was high time. It seems Oriental literature is a dangerous study.

June 8, 1843.

I have found to-day, to my great horror, this letter, begun a month ago; but I have been bothered to such a degree since this time that it has slipped unobserved. I have read my report at the Society, which as usual draws on me the holy indignation of all those of whom I speak, and particularly of every one of whom I have found nothing to say. "Human nature," as Sam Slick says, and particularly pedant nature. I suppose it has always been the same. Ranke is here; he has written a celebrated history of Popedom, and one of the Reformation. He reminds one of Thiers, bubbling over with most horrible French, which almost chokes him.

Botta has made great discoveries in Nineveh—the ruins of a palace all covered with sculptures and inscriptions. The sculptures have quite the Persepolitan character. He sent me some raw sketches of some of them, which I showed to Duchâtel, and got three thousand francs for continuing the *fouilles*. I shall print the letters and lithograph the sketches, bad as they are. Ampère is going to Egypt, and plagues me to accompany him, but I have neither the time nor the desire to do so. There has been a report that Fresnel had perished in a shipwreck on the Red Sea, but he has written since. He escaped in a curious manner. He was at Suez and ready to embark in an Arab ship, but four hours before he fell from an ass and broke his shoulder-blade, which kept him in Suez for a fortnight, during which the vessel which had gone perished, with all on board. There is some one coming, so I must conclude, if I wish this letter to go off at all.

Paris, June 22, 1843.

MY DEAR HAUGHTON,

I am overburthened with business, because, besides my own, I have to fight Botta's battles here. He is consul in Mosul, and has discovered there an Assyrian palace covered with sculptures and inscriptions. He sends me his discoveries, and I must communicate them to the ministers to get money for him, have them inserted in the *Moniteur*, get the designs lithographed and published in the journal, etc., all which costs me more trouble and time than I can tell. However, it is very curious, and he must be supported. He has to do with a savage Pasha, who stops the works from time to time, puts the workmen into prison to torture them, because he pretends Botta has found stores of gold and diamonds; and then I must go to the minister and preach to him about Semiramis and the necessity of upholding his own consul.

There is not much news, political or literary, anywhere; only the old heart-burnings and paltry dissensions everywhere. Miss Clarke is well, and so are Fauriel and Burnouf. I need not tell you how happy I shall be to see you again here.

About this time Julius Mohl was naturalized a Frenchman. His family seems to have become reconciled to the step, and he never failed to visit them every year. He writes again to Sir Graves Haughton:—

I have just come back here from a watering-place, where I have been with my father, and from travelling about in the mountains, where I have been to visit the seats of some friends of mine and to enjoy the fine air. . . . I have just been with the king for an hour. He was on his *lit de repos*, so he made me sit down, and we talked of all sorts of things as fast as we could. He is a very good man, but the inconvenient thing is that you can only talk of what he leads to, and are not allowed to start a subject, and in consequence of this arrangement I could not talk to him of what I wanted to tell him. He told me he would see me again, but this will probably be at a dinner or ball, where one cannot talk freely.

My laziness here has had a great advantage, as my eyes have very much recovered. Miss Clarke is at her sister's seat at Cold Overton. B—— is on the Rhine with his family. I wonder they are

not scandalized by the gay sabbaths and other misdoings of this dancing country. Perhaps they have not begun their balls, but their life is always very ungodly on Sundays.

Ever yours,
J. MOHL.

To his family in Germany (Madame von Schmidt writes) his visits were periods of pure enjoyment and rejoicing. From my earliest childhood I remember how my grandparents, my parents, and uncles looked forward to Uncle Julius' coming from Paris as to the great interest of the year. In those times, in 1840 and thereabout, a journey from Paris to Würtemberg was an affair of many days; public news were scanty. My uncle was inexhaustible in telling interesting stories—eagerly listened to by his three brothers at my grandfather's house at Stuttgart. The only one surviving now is Moritz, the economist. He has been member of the Würtemberg Chambers for more than thirty years, and the present prosperity of Würtemberg is in a great measure owing to his incessant labours. The fourth and youngest, Hugo, died first, in 1871. You may imagine how proud my grandmother was of her four sons, whom she had brought up so well; their conversation must have been delightful. I was too much of a child to appreciate it, but I remember their merry laughter to this day; for all of them had a very keen sense of humour. My father was the only one who married early; Uncle Moritz and Uncle Hugo remained unmarried. As for Uncle Moritz, his love for Uncle Julius, after his mother's death, was the one great affection of his life. The three brothers knew my aunt as Miss Clarke in Paris, and delighted in her company.

In 1844 M. Mohl was made a member of the Academy, the coveted object, ever since its institution by Richelieu, of all men of intellectual distinction in France (the Emperor Louis Napoleon among others), and all Paris flocks to hear the speeches at its public meetings.

In the same year a great sorrow fell upon M. Mohl and Miss Clarke, in the loss of their friend Fauriel. M. Mohl writes to Sir Graves Haughton that he is "almost crazy with grief," and in announcing the death to Manzoni he writes—

September 21, 1844.

I heard from Madame Arconati that you had the kindness to send to Miss Clarke the original of the portrait you had of him, and I beg you to believe that you could not have done anything more agreeable to the person who loved Fauriel more than all the world besides, and who is suffering from his death more than any one else.

She is at present in England, and very poorly, which has probably hindered her from writing herself to thank you.

M. Fauriel left all his lectures and manuscripts to Miss Clarke, who, with the help of M. Mohl, found her best consolation in attempting to do justice to the memory of their friend by deciphering and publishing them.

From one of her yearly visits to England Mrs. Clarke never returned, but remained with her elder daughter at Brickwall, in Sussex, and at St. Leonard's, to be nursed by her maid Jane, who was devoted to Mrs. Clarke, and yet could never be persuaded to cross the Channel. One of her great-grand-daughters, Mrs. Powel, writes of her—

My great-grandmother was a remarkable woman. I only remember her in the dim distance as a slight little old lady, in a grey satin gown and mobcap, sitting over the fire in a little low chair.* She died in the year 1846, at St. Leonard's, where she spent the last six months or so of her life, and was buried in our mausoleum at Northam Church, the village where my father's place, called "Brickwall," is situated. I can remember as a child watching the funeral procession from the attic windows of our old home.

The following letter, written by Mary to M. Mohl not long before her mother's death, is full of sad recollections and experiences :—

St. Leonard's, August 8, 1846.

† CHER PUPS,

Your last letter but one plunged me into such deep gloom, that I was in agonies for the five or six days which passed

* We recognize the likeness to Madame Mohl in this picture. † Translation.

before I received your last, which interested me extremely, besides calming my anxiety. I was not in a great hurry to answer it, because I fancy that, as you are running about from pillar to post, you may not receive this letter; however, if it should be lost, I am resigned to my fate.

My mother is neither better nor worse, and the doctor told my sister that in spite of her constant suffering she is not in more danger than she was last year; and my sister told me this morning that if I wanted to leave I might do so next month, as she is expecting Selina to stay here. I replied that in that case I would go in the middle of next month. I hope to finish arranging the Italian lectures.* I have been studying Dante all this time with great attention, and as I have done a great deal already, I think I shall soon come to the end. I am very sorry that I did not publish the Provençal lectures at my own expense, for they would have been printed much sooner. Besides my *procès*, I must go home to renew the lease of my apartment; and I must see the landlord. It is necessary for me to go, if only for a fortnight. It will distress my poor mother; but what can I do? She is so deaf that she does not hear unless one screams in her ear, and her head is so weak that she can interest herself in nothing. Miss Bailey has lent me some books, and has often been to see me, she is a great comfort to me; for it is hard to spend more than six months absolutely deprived of all sympathy, or conversation, always thrown in on one's self and witnessing such perpetual suffering—not to speak of sad recollections!

I have been passing through a sore trial, but I have suffered so much in my life that I feel as if I could almost set Fortune at defiance. But silence! for she is a wild beast, whose attention it is not safe to rouse.

Adieu, dear Pups. I am impatient for a letter from you, and I fear that this one will never reach you.

We may imagine the grief which the loss of a mother, so passionately loved, must have caused to her affectionate, impulsive daughter. To the end of her life Madame Mohl constantly talked of her, of her sweet nature, and she used to

* Fauriel's.

say her feeling for her "was too deep for words, and could only be expressed by tears."

Miss Clarke returned to Paris; but there were no more brilliant reunions in the Rue du Bac after the death of M. Fauriel and Mrs. Clarke.

In 1879, after her last irreparable loss, she alludes to this earlier trial in a letter to Lady Eastlake.

I lost a dear friend thirty-seven years ago. He left me all his papers and manuscripts; they were very valuable. I could then spend the whole day in reading, my memory was excellent. I was not married, but Mr. Mohl was a great friend also of M. Fauriel. He helped me, certainly, much by his advice; but still I had then a power of work which I have lost. I looked over and published almost all his lectures, which he would never take the trouble to do himself, and they must be good, for they sell now, and of those on Dante the edition is all sold. I tell you this to prove that, if I do not do my duty by my dear husband's memory, it is that I have no longer the faculties that I had. This conviction breaks my heart; for who will do it if I do not?

A niece of Mrs. Nightingale's, Miss Hilary Bonham Carter, became one of the most intimate friends and constant correspondent of both M. and Madame Mohl, even before their marriage. He wrote to her in 1846—

I have very little to say for myself. I am occupied with this great leviathan of a book, of which you have perhaps seen a volume at Miss Clarke's. The third volume has appeared, and I am working at the next. To enliven this dull occupation, I am fighting constantly a quantity of Don Quixote battles, not of my own. I am now preparing and priming for a new one, which will be long and hard-fought. It is to convince M. Salvandy that he is not fit to send out people on travels for the advancement of science. He has 150,000 francs a year for this purpose; but he and his predecessors send out incredible people to discover incredible things. For instance, a few weeks ago they sent Alexander Dumas, the "romancier," to Algiers. Another man, named Martin, they have sent to Germany,

where he has discovered the Niebelungen. A fellow called Belanger has been sent to Turkey, to write a history of Turkey. The man knows not a word of Turkish, or anything else. It were endless to count up these blunders. And then, when these travellers come back, they spend incredible sums of public money in publishing all sorts of trash they have brought home. Now, I want Salvandy to vest the power of sending out travellers in a permanent committee of competent persons. The money the State finds is quite sufficient to have all unknown countries explored scientifically and systematically; but you must send the right people, and on the right errand. But ministers seem completely struck with blindness; they seem incapable of distinguishing between one man and another, and have an unfortunate knack of choosing the wrong one. But this will be a great battle with him, and perhaps with his successors.

A few days ago I was on guard at the Tuileries. They put me as a sentinel before the great entrance from twelve to two o'clock at night. The corporal told me that I had nothing to do, and it was useless to tell me the watchword, as the soldier on the other side of the door would speak to the patrols. It was a clear and bitterly cold night, and as I was to do nothing I sat down in the sentry box, meditating on the new planet.* Many patrols passed me, but as I said nothing they went on peaceably. At last came a captain of the staff, who stopped a few paces from me, and we had the following dialogue:—

Captain. Factionnaire dormez-vous?

I. Non, mon Capitaine.

Captain. Est-ce-que vous n'avez rien à me dire?

I. Non, mon Capitaine.

Captain. Et pourquoi pas?

I. Parce que mon caporal l'a défendu.

Captain. Comment! il vous a défendu de parler.

I. Exactement.

Captain. Où est votre corps de garde?

I. Au drapeau, allez-y leur donner un savon vous me ferez plaisir.

Captain. Quelle sacrée boutique!

Then he went off in a fume, but I do not know what came of it. It is a wonderful institution.

* The planet Neptune.

52, Rue de Grenelle, December 22, 1846.

I have received yesterday your letter, and profit by the departure of your cousin to thank you for it. I was very much surprised in seeing that this errant dame, my brother's sister-in-law, has lighted on you. I am glad to hear she has fallen into kind hands. I ought to be proud of your appreciation of my countrywoman, but I, for my part, am by far more partial to English women; they have more energy and more mind, it seems to me. It is true I have been singularly fortunate in my English friends, and I have, in fact, not lived much in Germany since I became of an age to have lady-friends. But I am very much struck in Germany with the pretension of the ladies to singular profundity, which produces a sort of affectation very distasteful to me. It is true one is always much struck with the particular defects of one's own people, because one has naturally suffered from them, and a sore point is easily irritated. From living constantly among literary people, I have got a sort of infinite horror of their natural defects as a class. Sometimes they make me laugh, and, in fact, it is a continual comedy, when one knows the secret strings and springs of the creatures; but sometimes I am so vexed that I could wish reading and writing were abolished, and would rather emigrate to the Caffres or other savages, where literary glory is a thing unheard of. This very morning I have been pestered to death in legislating between two fools, of whom one wanted to fight the other (who is an abbé, doctor, and professor of theology), because the abbé had not quoted him. If one should see it in a comedy, one would think the man overdid his character; but the comedy of life is droller than anything the poets invent. The abbé revenged himself in printing the story, and reminding his enemy that he himself had worn the ecclesiastical cloth until he married—which is a fact; but you may imagine what a fury this specimen of theological venom produced. Isn't it a strange employment to be a *juge de paix* between these infuriated monsters, kicking up such a dust for such a reason, and pulling caps in so unseemly a manner for Madame Glory?

Master *Punch* is forbidden here, but we do get commonly a sight of him, because Sir Graves Haughton smuggles him in. The way of doing this is very simple. One has only to fold up the paper so that the title is not seen outside. The post rejects the paper when it sees the title, throwing it in the fire, but they never take the trouble to

open the band, because they have no time for unrolling every day thousands of English papers that come in.

I have not heard of Miss Julia, and am afraid she is frozen on Mount Ararat, and cut off from communication with the lower world. But there is somebody coming, so I must put an end to this scrawl.

Yours very sincerely,

J. MOHL.

Among the Mohl-Fauriel papers at the Institut is the following letter, contained in two others, from Miss Clarke to M. Mohl :— *

Si vous n'êtes pas nommé je vous épouserai si vous le désirez, pour montrer à ces vieux pédans que je vous connais mieux en mérite qu'eux et leur singe de ministre, et la suite le leur prouvera. C'est une chose réfléchie que je vous dis, faites vos réflexions et ne vous pressez pas.

This was enclosed in one which said—

Si jamais vous doutez de moi, ou m'en voulez, ouvrez ce billet, écrit un jour où vos affaires allaient mal.

The outside letter of all throws a new light on the relations between Miss Clarke and her two friends. It shows that she had long ago found out that she was only one among the many tender attachments of M. Fauriel, while she was the single absorbing, and, as it proved, the lifelong passion of M.

* So much hung upon these letters, that the originals must be given. The following are translations :—

1. If you are not appointed, I will marry you, should you wish it, to show those old pedants that I know your merits better than they or their ape of a minister, and the future will prove this. I speak after serious consideration. Reflect seriously on what I say, and do not reply hastily.

2. If ever you doubt me, or are angry with me, open this letter, written one day when fortune was against you.

3. I am not going out, and beg you to come. I wrote the enclosed letter several days ago. I ask you not to open it for a month. Feelings which words cannot express have made me keep it in my bag without giving it to you—and yet I wish you to know what I am ; and had you understood me six, or seven, or eight years ago, you would have spared me incalculable pain. But may God forgive you, for you also have been punished enough—too much.

Mohl, who, if he had dared, might have spared much suffering to them both. Here is the letter:—

Vendredi, le 4me.

Je ne sors point, et vous prie de venir, il y a plusieurs jours que j'ai écrit la lettre ci-incluse, je vous prie de ne pas l'ouvrir d'ici à un mois. Des sentimens que la parole n'atteint pas me l'ont fait garder dans un sac sans vous la donner, pourtant je veux que vous sachiez quelle je suis—et il y a six ans, ou sept, ou huit, que si vous m'aviez comprise vous m'auriez évité des peines incommensurables—mais que Dieu vous pardonne car vous avez été assez puni, et trop.

M. Mohl did not probably require much time for reflection before accepting the prize which had attracted him for so many years. There is a hint of his change of life in the passage in the following letter about his "Faustus-like cavern." That cavern has often been described to me with much laughter by Madame Mohl—how the books were heaped up, and four carpets laid one on the top of the other, because the dear books might never be disturbed.

May 1, 1847.

MY DEAR MISS HILLY,

I have just been made Professor of Persian Literature at the Collège of France, which is a drawback on my freedom of movements. However, I do not despair of seeing you and yours in the summer. I was to have got this same professorship eight years ago, but the king chose to give it to M. Taubert, a peer of France, for political reasons. Then it would have been a pleasure to me, but now I care little for it. I put my name on the list because I looked on it as my property. It is a strange thing, this life of ours, where you always get your business done when you are become indifferent to it, or nearly so. The Collège de France is a curious institution, founded by Francis I. against the Sorbonne, and destined to introduce the new branches of learning which the Reform had fostered, as Hebrew, classical Greek, and Latin, etc. From this time it has kept its privileges—is not subject to or connected with the university, and teaches all the sciences which find no room in the teaching which the university gives. Every new science, like

geology, political economy, Chinese hieroglyphics, etc., finds there a home to try to make its way to men's understandings. It is a very beautiful institution, and ought to be the first in the world if it came up to the idea which led to its foundation. It is open to everybody. The most ragged boy may go in, and nobody has a right to ask who he is; and numbers of ladies come to hear the lectures which may interest them. I recollect that even while I was following the lectures of Chinese there attended a lady most regularly, she had a thick green veil, which she kept down (I suppose not to distract us), and nobody has ever seen her face.

I have been interrupted, and this letter has suffered for it; indeed, I can hardly ever write a letter from the beginning to the end. I can compare myself to nobody under heaven but one of those Capuchin friars whom you have seen in Italy, sitting all day long in their confessional, hearing the strange stories of sinners of all sorts, consoling the one and rebuking the other; only my customers are literary people, calling on me to tell me their enmities, the conspirations of their rivals, their plans, and their helpless misery, their inconceivable infatuation, and all the ills which this species is heir to. Unfortunately, I seldom know a remedy for them, and can very seldom convince them that their enemies are not so black and malicious as they suppose. I don't know how I have come to be confessor to so many people; but so it is. And I could tell many a tale of the innermost recesses of literary life, some very laughable, some quite heart-rending. I do not know how it may be in England, where literature is not the business of so large a class as here, and where the interests and the ambition of literary people is not so easily excited as here where your books may make a prime minister, or a prophet, or anything of you. Then we have here a democratical organization of literary concerns which exists nowhere else. Every honour and every place is given by the votes of Academies and other bodies, so we are living in eternally the same bustle as Cambridge was in, according to your last letter, for the election of Prince Albert.

We are quiet enough, but all the soldiers, which made the Nicholsons wonder, are required in the provinces for the keeping open the roads for the corn which is brought to market. However, we have fortunately no Ireland.* What can be done with such a country? People speak of bad legislation as the root of all evil

* This was the year of the potato famine.

there; but I can see nothing in the legislation to explain in any way this intense misery. It is all in the nature of the people. What can you do with a nation in which not one in a hundred is capable of managing his own affairs, and of keeping himself from spending all he has in ostentation or in whiskey? I have known many Irishmen, but only one who did not live in perpetual trouble from want of precaution and the most common foresight, and he was from Belfast, and consequently most likely of Scottish blood.

I have been interrupted, but this time by very unexpected visitors — two fine ladies, one a singer, and the other an opera-dancer from Munich. They brought me a letter, but what I am to do for them is a mystery to me. They looked with astonishment at my *Faustus-like cavern, which I must soon leave*, being driven out by my books, but which is now in its perfection, and might do for any necromancer. I suppose they gave up instantly any idea of my being able to serve them, and in this they are right. They seem to be very decent people, though, and have very good manners; but what is Hecuba to me? You will find in the last *Quarterly* an article on arrow-headed inscriptions. You will see from it how these old things rise up and become living again; and we are only in the beginning of these discoveries. Every year will bring something new. I know of two other of these ancient palaces, which I will get the French Government to get dug out, and hope at least one of them will be the palace of a King of India, of which we have until now no specimen.

Layard's discoveries in Nimrood are magnificent, and you will see these next year in the British Museum. They are of Assyrian origin, and he has had the good luck of finding one of them which has been only moderately plundered before it was abandoned, so that he has got quantities of arms and ornaments in bronze and ivory, the last most beautifully carved.

May 7.

This letter will, I think, never come to an end. It has laid on my table I do not know how long; but I had troubles and most miserable anxieties enough since this time. If I had room I should describe to you the last election in the Academy, and how Madame Récamier and her court beat Louis Philippe and his favourite Vatoul, who wished to be elected; and how all the fair ladies in Paris fought this complicated battle, and how my friend Ampère won it. It is

worthy of an epic poem in seven cantos. But I must send off this scribble, else it will be buried again, and I shall appear more ungrateful to you than is right.

The happiest period of Madame Mohl's life was fast approaching. She was married in August, 1847.

CHAPTER III.

FROM 1847 TO 1850.

Madame Mohl's account of her marriage—The Friday evenings now begin in the Rue du Bac—Madame Quirins' description of them—Last days of Madame Récamier's *salon*—Revolution of 1848—Legouvé's lectures—Death of Châteaubriand—Visit to Germany—Political events—M. and Madame Mohl adopt their niece Ida—Her description of the life in the Rue du Bac—First acquaintance with the Stanleys on the Lago Maggiore—The Arconatis introduce us to M. and Madame Mohl.

THE engagement between M. Mohl and Miss Clarke was kept a profound secret, and as she was long past fifty, and her *fiancé* seven years younger, it is no wonder that she should have disliked her marriage being talked of beforehand. The difference of age between M. and Madame Mohl was, however, never perceptible, for she retained her childlike temperament and spirits to the last. But even when she was very old, at a time when people are generally proud of the years they have attained, she remained sensitive on the subject; for instance, when she was in England in 1870, it was impossible to persuade her to fill in the census.

It has been said that when she was asked her age at the Mairie she replied, "Monsieur, si vous insistez je me jetterai par la fenêtre mais je ne vous dirai pas mon âge." The story is apocryphal, but Madame Quirins says that one of the *témoins* told her that when the bride's age was read out at the Mairie, he blew his nose very hard in order to spare her feelings.

She often told me the story of her marriage, which used to amuse me extremely. It was to this effect:—

I gave my two servants warning, my dear, and told them I was going to travel in Switzerland. You know it is necessary to put up a placard the day before on the church you are going to be married in, announcing the event. So I gave a little boy some money to paste a play-bill over it at once, and waited at the corner of the street to see it done. When the morning came I told my maid I was going to a christening, as an excuse for putting on my best clothes. I didn't know whether I was standing on my head or my heels. After the ceremony I left Mr. Mohl and my witnesses at the church-door, got into a coach, and told the man to drive to 100, Rue du Bac (she lived at 120). I got out as soon as we arrived, paid the driver, went into the porter's lodge, and asked if Madame Bertrand was at home—this was to give time for the coach to drive off. The porter thought me very stupid. He assured me that no Madame Bertrand had ever lived there, which I knew perfectly well. When I got home I took off my fine clothes and my wedding-ring, and packed up for my journey. My servants had no idea that I was married. I did not see Mr. Mohl again for two days, when I met him and our witnesses at the railway station. We all dined together, and Mr. Mohl and I set off for Switzerland; and then, luckily for me, the Duc de Praslin murdered his wife, and everybody talked about that, and forgot me and my marriage.

She wrote to her sister, without any previous warning, that "as an aunt was like a fifth wheel to a coach, she had been married that morning to Mr. Mohl."

The following winter Madame Quirins writes—

The parties were resumed, but on Friday instead of Saturday evenings. The children had grown up; many new friends were added to their numbers. All enjoyed themselves as much as formerly, if not more, and nothing gave dear Madame Mohl so much pleasure as to see the young people amusing themselves. The dining-room was given up to dancing, and the young people made tea in the small *salon*. The inner *salon*, which you so well know, was more than ever kept sacred to the more serious and distinguished guests.

Among Madame Mohl's very intimate friends were Lady Elgin and her daughters, Ladies Charlotte, Augusta and Frances Bruce, who had also a very pleasant *salon*, to which many of Madame Mohl's friends, both young and old, were kindly invited. Later on, as you know, every distinguished person in Paris, whether French or foreign, passed through Madame Mohl's *salon*.

M. Mohl brought thither all the *savans* of the Academy and the Asiatic Society, and, although he had not her animation, added considerably to the attraction of the Rue du Bac.

All those (Madame Quirins continues) who had the privilege of knowing M. Mohl intimately can bear witness to his great kindness of heart, and the pleasure he took in rendering service to others, often at the cost of great trouble to himself. Monseigneur Buquet, Bishop of Surinam, told me that, although he had not the honour of knowing M. Mohl, he had the greatest respect for him, and that he had been greatly touched by his kindness to a French missionary who had passed several years in Japan, and came to Paris to get a French and Japanese dictionary published. M. Mohl kindly took his interest in hand, and one evening went to him at eleven o'clock to tell him that he had succeeded in obtaining the publication of his work, and would not wait until the next day to announce this good news to him. This is, of course, only one instance of his numerous acts of kindness and thoughtfulness.

Fostered by the tender care of this excellent man, endowed with extraordinary powers of enjoyment, and surrounded by such interesting and attached friends, it may well be imagined that Madame Mohl's middle life, in spite of her delicate health, which was a great torment to her, became a very happy one, and that her spirits soon regained the spring of which the sad events of the last three years had bereft them. Madame von Schmidt writes—

My uncle took care of her in quite a motherly way. She looked up to him with the greatest confidence, valued and trusted him. He was never tired of telling her the best of his humorous stories, of discussing scientific and literary subjects with her; he was ever sure

of her sympathy with his pursuits and studies. Society to her was not frivolous amusement; she thought highly of it, believed it to be of vital importance in the lives of individuals and nations. Her predilection for France was so strong precisely because society there is, or was, of more importance than in any other country. She hated everything in the shape of a *coterie*, but the free intercourse of clever high-minded people, *talk* as an art, she valued more than anything. She abhorred everything like ostentation and show. Her luxury was good conversation.

Although Madame Mohl had now a *salon* of her own, every afternoon, except Monday, found her at the Abbaye; and thither Châteaubriand, who had lost the use of his limbs, and who lived on the ground-floor of the house the Mohls occupied, was likewise carried every day. To Madame Récamier's also came the members of the old aristocracy—the Duc de Laval, Matthieu de Montmorency, etc.—as well as all the intellectual celebrities, some of whom were members of the Chamber, and came in every day to relate what had taken place. Nothing remarkable in private or public ever passed that was not known there sooner than elsewhere. Whoever had first read a new book came to give an account of it. La Jeune France was represented by Benjamin Constant, Cousin, Villemain, Guizot, Thierry, Mignet, Rémusat, Thiers, Tocqueville. Ampère came every day. "His conversation," says Madame Mohl (and the present writer can testify to the truth of her description)—"his conversation was like a stream of sparkling water, always fresh, never fatiguing. His wit was so natural that you never thought of anything but the amusement he gave you." To a chosen few out of this circle, M. de Châteaubriand read his "Memoirs," bit by bit as he wrote them. The effect was prodigious. In some of the scenes Madame Mohl said tears would unconsciously steal down her face, to the great satisfaction of the author. Here, too, Rachel recited the part of Esther for a charitable subscription, and from that time never

undertook a new part without having given the first recital at the Abbaye-au-Bois.

To us who are unable to command such stimulating intellectual food, it may be some consolation to find that those who enjoyed it were not exempt from *ennui*. The most courted, the idol of that society, M. de Châteaubriand himself, suffered most severely from this malady. He often said he wished that *ennui* would settle in his leg, for then he would cut it off!

Madame Mohl, however, never, either then or afterwards, seemed to know what it meant. She enjoyed life thoroughly, and I have often heard her say she would like to begin again and go through every bit of the past. She once said this before Mr. Greg, who agreed with her. She continued that there was only one woman she knew besides herself (Lady Verney) who was of the same opinion, whereas almost all men felt with her, and she believed it was because men's lives are active and most women's passive, action being preferable to endurance. In a letter to Miss Bonham Carter she wrote—

"If I could catch back twenty years, I should walk upon clouds. I shall leave all my undertakings not half fulfilled—not a quarter. If I could steal the life and youth out of some fool, I would. Oh for the philosopher's stone! not for gold, but for days."

In the winter of 1847 the inner circle of the society at the Abbaye was broken by the death of Ballanche. Madame Récamier, who had just been couched, would not be restrained from watching by his bedside and cheering his last hours. This charitable act destroyed her sight, and her health suffered so much that she was forced to go into the country to recruit. During her absence, Madame Mohl went every day to M. de Châteaubriand, who was alone and helpless,* to amuse him and write a few lines from him to Madame Récamier. When

* Madame de Châteaubriand died in the beginning of 1847.

she took leave, he would take her hand and say, with a look of ineffable gratitude, "Adieu, madame; how good of you to visit me in my utter misery!"

The winter of 1847 passed away (Madame Mohl writes), no one suspecting what 1848 was to bring, till the tocsin and cannons of February, and the rising of the populace like the roarings of a mad bull, put all common sense and moral feeling to flight. Terror took possession of all; a red spectre stood before every imagination. During the time between February and the end of the civil war in June, wherever you called, the ladies were sitting disconsolate, with their hands in their laps, saying, "Providence alone can help us!" thus increasing by their imbecility the general malady.

Madame Mohl describes the Revolution in the following letter to the Nightingale family :—

March 1, 1848.

DEAR EMBLEY FRIENDS ALL,

I only got yours this minute, and being determined to write instantly, I put pen and ink by my side before I opened it. Hitherto we are safe enough, but I have my doubts as to the future. I do not say for my own person, which I really think nothing about, and if I did should not fear, having a friend or two in each party—except, perhaps, in the *juste milieu*, which I had come to detest. You can't imagine how quick the whole thing came about. Tuesday I went out to see the people go to the banquet in the Champs Elysées, very peaceful they seemed, there was a stream of people along the road from 8 a.m., not very thick; on coming back, the Chamber was surrounded by dragoons, and crowds of blouses everywhere, bawling out, "La Réforme!" but one had no idea how it would end. Wednesday we heard of the change of ministry in the morning—the regency in the evening; on Thursday, the republic;—all this with an accompaniment of popguns on all sides. Mr. Mohl served three nights last week in the Garde Nationale to make a show, for they had not a ball, or cartridge, or an ounce of powder in the whole arrondissement; not much more had they in the others. The people have on the whole behaved well; but if you heard his daily accounts of the nights he spends! the tipsy sovereigns we have! There are so many episodes, I know not which to choose. Old Madame Guizot and the three

children were hid at Madame Le Normant's, who was taken ill, probably in consequence of the fatigue, Madame Récamier making lamentation all day about it; so I set off Friday morning with a letter to Madame Le Normant, to offer my house to them. I climbed over barricades; I crossed the Tuileries; every window smashed; smoking heaps lying about; people, or rather ragamuffins, picking up and poking about them; the garden full of *canaille en blouse*—not a well-dressed woman to be seen. However, I reached the Bibliothèque in safety, in spite of the incessant popping of guns—mere mischief, for every lad had a gun; they all went to the École Militaire on Thursday, and got, I think, sixty thousand cartridges and all the guns in it. The fact is the whole of the guns in Paris, except those which the Garde Nationale had, are in the hands of the people.

My offer* was declined, and I came back through the Carrousel, which showed the same physiognomy. Some of the barricades were eighteen feet high and more, but there were little passages next the houses, about two or three or so, not easy to find on account of the crowds squeezing through. They were very civil, and one man handed me over the barricade. The poor old lady, Madame Guizot, had heard on Thursday the whole evening, "À bas Guizot!" "À la potence!" and the Le Normants, whose windows are on the ground-floor, were obliged to illuminate. She (Madame Guizot) is eighty-two or eighty-four. Her husband was guillotined in the great revolution; she has worn mourning ever since. She never uttered a complaint during the five days' uncertainty about her son, but yesterday, while Madame Récamier was there, she received a letter announcing his safe arrival in our little old island, and she burst forth in prayer, raising her hands to Heaven. It was very touching, especially her silence till then. The children have joined their father; you will probably see them in London, where they will excite great interest. The obstinacy of the king and of the whole set has brought us to this blouse-y government. Mr. Mohl is very gloomy on the subject; he says we are in the hands of savages; others do nought but admire the good sentiments they hear expressed by the people. A young man of St. Cyr, with whom I dined yesterday, told me he was at Neuilly during its destruction; he saw them take their swords and cut down the middle every picture of Leopold Robert. The glass and china formed a sort of gravel-walk all about, two feet high, all

* To the Guizots.

smashed to powder. The cellar was the object; the wines were celebrated. They broke off the neck of the bottle, drank a swig, and threw down the rest—that was the fashionable manner. These St. Cyrians are a military school; they are very popular, and, having a good education, were very useful in quieting the mob. There are six hundred in the Hôtel de Ville, and the Place de Grève is full of mob with cannons. They are a sort of friends together, but ready to keep them in order, like a good keeper and a tame tiger. The general feeling is adhesion to any government that will keep order—a perfect determination against any party for the king or even regency. Madame de Lamartine told a friend of mine, Madame Desroyes, that what she dreaded most was any party for the Duchess of Orleans, because the people are so suspicious that they would cry out treachery instantly, and woe unto us if the tiger party gets uppermost. I feel very much as if I were shut up in the Jardin des Plantes, and the whole set in cages were let loose, my intense love for animals would make me delight in the spectacle, my pleasure in grace and beauty would almost make me forget their claws, and my esteem for them is such that even if they put out their claws I could not call them cruel: they must eat, and the retractile family live on live prey. The people have behaved prettily, and their moral beauty may stand in lieu of the physical beauty of the quadrupeds; but, after all, they must eat, and who is to feed them? We—their admirers? It is all very pretty to see them growl over their prey at first, but if we must always furnish it it will fatigue our pockets. The account of the Duchess of Orleans would fill three pages—how she was going to Neuilly; how, when they came out at the Pont tournant, no carriage was there, and she suddenly said she'd go to the Chamber of Deputies. This I have from one who was with her—the wife of the Comte de Paris' preceptor. They walked thither and got in. Then I heard the rest of her behaviour from the Duc de Noailles, who was near her. She was down in the lower part of the half-circle, which got crammed with people. She was very pale, but dignified; she attempted twice to speak, but either could not or did not speak loud enough to be heard. The crowd growing intense, they got her out of it higher up, whence she went away. She did not know the way along the passages, nor did the gentlemen with her, and she got separated from her children. They ran along and a door was opened which was thought to lead straight out; but it was a window, not

very high; and hearing people rushing after her, she jumped out, and two men accidentally there received her and took her into the house of the Speaker, in a room not finished, and told her to put a beam against the door. The preceptor kept with the child, but where they met I don't yet know. She was again pursued, and went to the Hôtel des Invalides; they had been forbidden to open the gates. She went to two other houses. The preceptor's wife, Madame Régnier, had left her husband on entering the Chamber of Deputies, because she had with her her little boy, who fainted with terror; she went to a friend's, and some hours after a gentleman came from her husband, who told her to go and join him at the Invalides. She went, they were just gone, she then went to the two other houses indicated; they were just gone from thence; and on Monday, when her part of the story was told me, she knew not where he was, nor the duchess, and nobody knows; perhaps she may be in England. I go every day to Madame Récamier's to hear the news. We are very quiet now, but on Thursday people were fighting everywhere. The Garde Municipale were many of them killed. They answer to our policemen, and are picked men. On Thursday a little carpenter whom I often employ came to ask me a great service—what? to lend him a coat and trousers to save the life of his uncle, who was a Garde Municipale, shut up in their house in the Rue de Tournon! The people wanted to massacre the Gardes, and he could not go out in his uniform or in his shirt. The little carpenter was beside himself. He had a vast pistol hid in his jacket which I'm sure he could not have fired; I gave him the clothes, and the man came afterwards to thank me. It is agreed on all hands that, though all has been prepared by secret societies, they would not have dared break out had not the Municipal Guard fired on the mob from the Hôtel des Affaires Etrangères, I think, on Wednesday and that was a mistake. Many people were killed, picked up and carried about to show to the mob. Instantly they ran to arms. Ferrari, who is one of the Société Secrète of the ultra-republicans, told me last night that on part of Thursday the party was in a state of vacillation, and thought they must give up the whole; then they took courage again. I wish I could remember all I hear. but one's head gets quite addled. I can't describe what I felt on Wednesday night, near twelve, as I was sitting over the fire alone reading, I heard the tocsin down the chimney. No English can understand the horror of that sound;

every great massacre of the great Revolution was ushered in by it; and in my childhood, when tales of the Revolution were in every one's mouth, the impression made was so black that the very word makes me shudder. I went to Mr. Mohl; he was asleep, he got up; but as we knew nothing he did not go out. Next morning we were *en pleine révolution*, and with my full advice and participation he went to the Garde Nationale. I have talked over two or three others to go, and think I am entitled to a *couronne civique*. Adieu. Love to all.

MARY MOHL.

The story is continued in the following letter to Miss Bonham Carter. It begins with an amusing diatribe against English luxury—a subject she was never tired of dilating upon.

May 26, 1848.

DEAREST COZ,

I have not written so long that I fear you have renounced the relationship, and I have quite lost the thread of my discourse. I know not what to begin upon, but shall get into my natural state when you write to tell me all about the wedding, and how the bride looked, etc., as in the days of Sir C. Grandison of marrying celebrity. Marriage seems gone out of fashion now; you are all too fine in England to afford it. The only good this vile revolution will perhaps do is to stop a little the career of luxury, finery and show, which was fast arriving to the English state. You are all so far gone, that I don't think anything could bring you back to the state of the beginning of the last century. Many private individuals are willing to live simply when nobody looks at them, but the moment they have company they must produce all their finery, and hire new servants to wait, if they have none naturally. Now, it's all that, which was *not* done a hundred years ago, which then made love-matches, and kept people's brains from spinning to keep the house up without ruin. My granny used to tell me how her husband (a captain in the navy) used to nail up the lines in the garden for the two maids to hang up the clothes on washing-days, and hundreds of other services. I have seen nothing of that in my time, gentlemen of small fortunes go to the club to see grand plate and furniture, and madam has a

governess, instead of teaching the children herself in the back parlour.

We hope for a little fighting soon. The Garde Nationale give dinners to the line. They are so loving that one told me yesterday six hundred *nationale* had regaled three hundred of the line, and it was like *l'enlèvement des Sabines.* They each took one between two, and vowed eternal friendship. Each paid five francs; the line paid nothing. Our vile Government conspires against us; but when they go too far—which I trust they will—the National Assembly will grow wrathful and turn them out. Then the *nationale* will fire in good earnest, and we shall get rid of them—I mean the present vile directory. What do you think of Mignet being turned out of his place because he wrote to some Italian, in a private letter, that he thought the best thing the Milanese could do was to join the Piedmontese? Some fool published the letter; but that is liberty now.

I was at a closing lecture the other day upon the moral history of women. It was beautiful, though delivered by a staunch republican; but he had a sense of justice, at least with regard to women. I wish he would publish his lectures. His name is Legouvé. He is a man of independent fortune, and one of the few who take up that side of politics from pure motives; but they are too few to do good, and do harm from the countenance they give to the rest. I can't help hoping some little good may come of this man's lectures. He is very clever, stands high, talks no nonsense (or very little), does it from the best motives. He proposed various amendments. If he would lecture again next winter, I should propose to whichever of you all has the best memory to come and abide in my spare bedroom for the purpose of writing down the whole for the good of the British nation. He was rapturously applauded by the men-folk; the ladies were too modest, though I was not, for I clapped till my hands ached.

I don't believe in pillage so much as I did. I believe the Assembly will do good in time; but ruin goes on every day increasing. The noble, the generous, the good Delesserts are giving up their banking house—not failing, but paying off. Every good enterprise in the country for thirty years was invented or aided by them; but failure follows failure, like cards falling on each other. There is not a commercial house or a manufactory in the whole country that will stand in another few months. They say here that the English news-

papers exult over the universal ruin. Oh, Christian England, hide thy face if it be true! Thy hypocrisy is even worse than the universal madness that has seized this miserable country. The Imprimerie Royale, the noble establishment which gave to science the power of spreading over Europe, and to which all looked up, is going; the workmen have risen against all subordination, till at length the chief would stay no longer. The minister of justice went to expostulate. He told them that, of all the workmen in Paris, they alone were certain of a maintenance in their old age; they were always paid; the flagging of business never attained them. No, no, they would elect their own chief; they would have more money; *i.e.* they are mad. Louis Blanc's emissaries worked on them for three months, and have disorganized the whole. He, the wretched imp, is bowed down by contempt. Nobody will speak to him in the House, and he hardly ever goes there; but the mischief he has done is irreparable.

How thankful Louis Philippe and Guizot ought to be to the present set who have found means to make them appear great losses.

Ever thine, dearest Coz,

M. MOHL.

The disturbed condition of the town did not, however, prevent the *habitués* of the Abbaye-au-Bois from meeting.

M. de Châteaubriand, like an old oak struck by lightning, beautiful in its decay, sat, seemed to listen, and smiled when one of his favourites entered. About March, a bad cough which he had grew worse; in May he could not leave his room. Madame Récamier went to him every day at the hour he used to go to her. Her friends joined her, and sometimes some old friend of his own. During the terrible days of June, when he was asked what he thought, he said he cared nothing about it. The cannons and the thunder on the worst day seemed to vie with each other. He was a little roused by the death of the archbishop. In spite of the constant firing, the barricades which she could not see, and the *garde mobile* stationed at the corner of every street, Madame Récamier, though blind and nervous, never missed a day in coming to the Rue du Bac. Since her blindness she had been unable to walk in the streets, and as the coaches were in danger of being taken and piled up for barricades, the drivers were unwilling to go out.

Before these terrible days M. de Châteaubriand had taken to his bed, to rise no more. Madame Récamier would leave the room to conceal her tears. His eyes followed her, but he scarcely ever spoke; not once after extreme unction had been administered. She could not see him, and his silence seemed cruel. She dreaded his dying in the night, when it might be impossible to send for her in time, and it was a comfort to her that she had a friend living upstairs (Madame Mohl) who could give her a room, where she spent three nights. On the morning of July 3, at about seven, she was called down; in about an hour all was over.

The current of her life was dried up. She wished for nothing in the world but to be good enough to die.*

From these sad and terrible scenes M. Mohl took his wife to visit his friends and relations in Germany and Holland. In all these visits to Germany it was very gratifying to Madame Mohl to see the estimation in which her husband was held.

From Julius Mohl.

Paris, December 23, 1848.

MY DEAR MISS HILLY,

You know we have been for about six months in Germany and Holland, and have enjoyed our travels very much. We found in Frankfort two of my brothers, and Hugo came a little later, so that we were all together, which had not been the case for many years. Then I have found many of my friends and schoolfellows as deputies in Frankfort, engaged in this desperate business to bring about a peaceful revolution, and to found an empire without fighting. It was certainly the most curious sight possible, and the singular strength and equally singular weakness of this new body was very worthy to be seen and observed. Of course we had the very best of opportunities, and were in the secret of everything—if there can be a secret in a place where you find the whole Cabinet dining in a public garden, and discussing their measures while they eat a cutlet. I once found them so, and sat down amongst them and ordered my own dinner, not knowing that I was intruding. Robert, however, gave me a hint that I had better occupy another table until they had done discussing their business.

* From Madame Mohl's "Madame Récamier."

The rupture with Austria, produced by the brutal execution of Blum and the inextricable confusion of matters in Berlin, must destroy the assembly of Frankfort, if the extreme necessity of the union does not produce an irresistible conviction that there is nothing behind the assembly at Frankfort but anarchy and military despotism. I am much more anxious about this than about things here, bad as they are; but I never hoped anything from this republic, and much from Frankfort; at least it was a beautiful dream—and here always a hopeless reality. We went from Frankfort to the Hague, where the Princess* of Orange called me. She is an old friend of mine. I knew her well before her marriage, and am very fond of her company. When I saw her first she was like a thing of light and sunshine, and of an excessive vivacity, since then the sad realities of life have sobered her and made her very thoughtful, although the old spirit breaks out from time to time. We went to Leyden, where I wanted to see the learned people, and since then we are here looking on the strange panorama which this country exhibits. When we went away Cavaignac was all in all, and the most popular man ever seen; when we came back he was done for, and Bonaparte, whom every one laughed at a few weeks before, had become the great man, and the inevitable president of the republic without republicans. The fact is the republic had never any existence in the provinces, except in a few towns, as Lyons, Limoges, Tours, etc., where the workmen are communists; the rest of the country would not hear of it, and the stupidity of the Government did all it could to make a republic impossible; therefore the peasants took hold of the name of Bonaparte because some took him for his uncle, and the wavering ones hoped at least he would deliver them from the republic, and when the politicians saw that there was an army without chiefs, they went over to it; and so it came that Thiers, Molé, Bugeaud, and a heap of other ambitious and ambiguous men, became Bonapartists. It is a great shame. The moderate party had, in a long and dangerous struggle during nine months, effectually put down the red republicans, the communists, and even the party of the national. The moderate people would have elected Cavaignac, and forced him to get rid of the rest of the *coterie du national*, and have reasonable ministers. We were sure to get out of the slough of despond by the mere force of public opinion; but now this inconceivable intrigue has disorganized the moderate party and given

* The late Queen of Holland.

power to a man who is known for nothing but his foolhardiness, who has shown himself during these last months to be as wavering as he is inefficient, and we are thrown back in a world of accidents and most unforeseen enterprises. One thing is certain, that the red republic is killed; but it was not Bonaparte or Thiers who killed it, but we moderate burghers, who fought the "Rouges" in June, and resisted them in everything. If anything can revive them, it is the faults and imperious designs of this fellow Bonaparte. The corruption of Louis Philippe's government had given it over to the republicans, their incapacity has delivered us into the hands of a pretender, and what his folly will do we shall see, but nobody can divine. The great majority which he has got is, at any rate, of great advantage to the country, because it produces confidence in commercial transactions, and will facilitate the opening of the workshops.

It has become impossible for me to take a serious interest in politics, except when there is any danger of the red republic, which I am ready to fight against any day it may show itself. All the rest is to me like one of the fantastic pantomimes I have seen in London theatres; it turns round and round, and shows a succession of unequalled nonsense. Lamartine is quite done for, and I doubt if he can ever get up again; but this is not certain, because in this country no man who does not give himself up quite entirely is ever quite undone. They are so forgetful. Louis Bonaparte has been the most ridiculous man in the world, and now he will get six or seven million votes; and if Lamartine keeps quiet for some time, and then begins to speechify and flatter some ruling passion, he may be as popular again, although people of sense will never trust him, but they are so much in the minority that their opinion is of little consequence in a moment of popular fury. People say he is mad. I mean medically speaking; I don't know if it is true. He has been mad from vanity many years; but this is rather an advantage in public life. I am heartily sick of all this, and the eternal repetition of the same thing by everybody makes one half crazy. We are lost in a mist of unreal follies and senseless words, and everything else is neglected.

But there is no danger; and if your cousins will try to get some amusement out of the dulness of this place, they are welcome and perfectly safe. I hear that a military revolution is announced for the purpose of carrying Bonaparte to the Tuileries and proclaiming him

emperor, but do not believe it; we have had announcements of similar movements every week for these last six months, but only one has broken out. I do not believe that the army is ready to proclaim him, nor that he dares to do it now. My kindest remembrances to all the Carters, the Nightingales, and all the singing birds of the various tribes and clans. Yours very truly,

J. MOHL.

Madame Mohl was, as I have often heard her say, "absurdly fond of children," and at Heidelberg she fell in love with Mr. Robert Mohl's daughter Ida, whom she at once wished to adopt.

Madame von Schmidt writes—

My aunt took to me at once. I soon overcame the awe with which at first I had looked upon the strange lady, and loved her dearly from the very beginning. In the following May, my uncle went all the way from Paris to Strasburg, where I was at school, and brought me to Paris. It was in the days of the revolution, and my parents had been afraid of my travelling alone. My uncle took me all over Paris himself to show me the sights, and was never tired of explaining them to a poor schoolgirl like me. I spent eight winters in the enchanting atmosphere of the Rue du Bac. My uncle was by no means a stern or indifferent public man; his sympathies were strong, his humour keen, and his kindness unfailing. He took pity on all sick and poor people, had for ever unfortunate Germans applying to him for help, and he put himself always out of the way to do service to others. He was sociable, and fond of women's talk and company. He was never tired of repeating in the evening to my aunt the events of the day, the anecdotes and *mots* collected at the Institut, the good stories he had read, or of discussing some interesting linguistic or historic problem with her. In short, nothing could be more fascinating than their talk. Every other conversation appeared to me shallow twaddle compared to theirs."

It was shortly after Madame Récamier's death that Mademoiselle Ida arrived, and one may fancy how her bright presence cheered her aunt, whom she found, she says, "quite melancholy."

In the following year (September, 1850) M. and Madame Mohl, after leaving their niece with her parents at Heidelberg, pushed on to the Italian Lakes. Next to the Manzonis, the Arconatis (who became the connecting link between ourselves and the Mohls) were their most valuable Italian friends. The Marchese, an excellent, honourable man, was eclipsed by his brilliant wife, the Marchesa Costanza, one of the most distinguished women of her time. They were involved in the early Italian troubles, and spent many years in exile in the splendid old Castle of Gaesbeck, five miles from Brussels. "Here," my father says, writing in 1852, "when I first knew them, more than twenty years ago, the Arconatis, exiles themselves, presided over a little court of the most distinguished of the Italian refugees, in which Arrivabene was the prime minister, and Berchet, Scalvini, and Collegno the principal courtiers." After the amnesty of 1838, the Arconatis returned to Piedmont, leaving Gaesbeck to be occupied by Arrivabene.

They had a beautiful villa at Pallanza, on the Lago Maggiore, and it was there that M. and Madame Mohl visited them.

One evening an awful thunderstorm broke over the lake. Soon after it cleared away, a young Englishman and his sister came up to the villa, where they had heard that an English lady was staying, to beg for some tea for their mother, who was suffering from the effects of the storm which had caught them while on the lake and forced them to put into a little inn close by. (The present imposing structure did not then exist.) These young people were Arthur and Mary Stanley, and this was the beginning of the ardent friendship between Madame Mohl and Arthur Stanley which added so much pleasure and interest to both of their lives. The next morning the inhabitants of the villa called at the inn and invited the Stanleys to come to them, and all were delighted with each other. But Madame Mohl never stayed

with any of the Stanleys until after the dean's marriage in 1863, nor was she ever "trotted out" by them—an expression which seems inconceivable to all who remember the dignity and refinement of Mrs. Stanley.

Soon after her return to Paris, Madame Mohl was summoned to Limoges to conduct her *procès*—a lawsuit with the Sireys. She wrote the following amusing account of it to Miss Bonham Carter, who remained in the Rue du Bac in order not to interrupt her course of study in drawing.

Limoges, November 15, 1850. Monday, 5 o'clock.

DEAR HILLY,

As I wrote to Mr. Mohl Saturday, it is your turn to-day. I spent four hours at the court, heard Le Fèvre d'Aumale splutter all manner of accusations of fraud. He is the adversary—a lawyer who pleads himself. The worst of it is my mother signed some paper long ago, which gives some colour to the accusation; and I signed too, they say, which I had no right to do, for I was not of age. However, though this looks ugly if it's true (I have not the slightest recollection of it), they say it don't bear on the main point; the real point is a quip of the law which none but lawyers can understand. There were ten creatures all assembled and seated like inquisitors, besides odds and ends of folks on the benches, or rather on very good armchairs behind things very like counters, only perched up high. I wrote Saturday to one M. David, whom I knew slightly, felicitating myself in my letter that he was not a judge. (N.B.—One must not perform even usual civilities to a judge, lest it should look like corruption.) I asked him yesterday when he came if I was to pay visits. He said, *No* (*i.e.* to judges, as some folks do). I said I was greatly rejoiced thereat; and when he rose to take leave, he informed me he was to sit. I said, "Pray make me lose if you like, but don't keep me long." I should have added that I had two young ladies flourishing about in Paris, and was sadly wanted; but as I only just received yours to-day, I could not. Every one is in a state of ecstasy at my lawyer. I had no idea he was such a great man; however, I like him very much. Oh, if you had seen my adversary to-day! He stretched out his arm at me at the frauds I had practised, looked daggers, ranted—I at first was agitated, and

then inclined to laugh. Madame Sirey is here. We were quite an army, with her two lawyers, my two, Desirée's two, and an amateur or so, all in one clump.

Tuesday evening.

The whole day, from twelve to four, was again spent at the palace, and my lawyer has not spoken yet; but I am told that the judges are all sick of Le Fèvre d'Aumale. Be that as it may, he talked three hours to-day, and then the lawyer for the other adversary, Dusaillant, began. He has a little more to say to-morrow, and then *mine* comes. I had no idea what a considerable man mine is, they all pay court to him as if he were a young beauty. I dined downstairs to-day with him and Boudin (the *avoué* from Paris), and two of the attorneys here for Madame Jeanron. They were all very entertaining, and I never had a pleasanter dinner. My lawyer is remarkably agreeable, and even if my case is lost (which I don't believe) I shall like him. He is a very refined, quiet, intelligent man.

It was in this month that we first heard of Madame Mohl. Until the spring of 1848 my father had been very little in France, but he happened to be in Paris during the famous attack on the Assembly on May 15, and he was so much interested in all that he saw and heard that he recorded his experiences in a journal which was destined to be the first of a series, and he ever after spent a portion of every year in Paris, where he soon was as much at home as in London.

The winter of 1850–51 was passed by our family in the south, and on our way we spent some time in the delightful society of Turin, then the Athens of Italy. One day Madame Arconati said that she must make us acquainted with Madame Mohl. We had heard of her, probably from some very stupid person, as a sort of blue-stocking, I can still hear the tone in which Madame Arconati answered, "Elle n'est pas du tout pédante." And on our way back to England, in the spring of 1851, the foundation was laid of the constant friendship between her and my father—a friendship which she was so kind as to extend to the next generation.



Yours ever Mary Ingle

CHAPTER IV.

TO THE COUP D'ÉTAT (1851–52).

Early married life—Opposition between France and Germany—Attempts of Russia—Political and industrial stagnation—Waiting for the president's next move—Fear of the Rouges—Michelet—Germany should unite under one head—Horror of music—Expectation of a *coup d'état*—Haug and Kinkel—President at Dijon—Madame Mohl in London—Expedition to the Euphrates—Alarm in the Assembly—The *coup d'état* succeeds from fear of socialism—Indignation at Lord Palmerston's approval—Love for England—Recollections of the Rue du Bac during the Empire.

M. and Madame Mohl's letters give a delightful picture of their early married life. The contrast between their dispositions and pursuits seems to have been a source of amusement instead of irritation to them both. On politics they were entirely of one mind.

From Julius Mohl to Miss Bonham Carter.

Rue du Bac, January, 1851.

MY DEAR MISS HILLY,

Next Monday is one of these monster balls at the Hôtel de Ville. I have got an invitation, but only for myself, of course. I don't think of going to get a week's *migraine;* but I keep it a deep secret, as it would afflict Ida to hear of this fine occasion so nearly missed.

I am becoming quite mad with these people. It was the interest of the French in old times to keep Germany divided and weak, and they speak even now with great profundity on this fundamental root of French politics, just as if it were a law of nature, although circumstances have changed to such a degree that their greatest interest is to see Germany raised against Russia. Also Russia will

by degrees make of Germany an instrument against France; at any rate, they hope to get the left side of the Rhine in the scramble, and, like all barbarians, are ready to sacrifice everything to a present advantage.

Paris, March 29, 1851.

I wanted to write to you a long time ago, but what with my big books, my lectures, and a great sleepy-headedness, I can hardly come up to what must be done. We are all *grippés* here, the whole town, and uncommonly stupid. The dancing season is over, to Ida's great regret; she only gets some occasional hops in the house or at the Americans. In fact, people here have tried to amuse themselves as much as they could, and as if it had been their last winter; and now they are quiet, waiting with a sort of stupid horror for the cataclysm of 1852, improving the time by quarrelling among themselves and strengthening the red people, who are waiting more patiently than is in their nature. The worst is the entire stagnation of industry; people draw out their capital from any undertaking they have in hand, and in a few months we shall have on our hands a starving multitude, as in March, 1848.

You have perhaps seen in some newspaper an account of the affair of Michelet; it is a queer story. He had some talent, but always alloyed by an *esprit faux*, being on the look-out for strange combinations and picturesque expressions, this weed has of course overgrown in him the good seed, and the applause of the anti-clerical party and the acclamations of his auditory have driven the man almost raving mad. He is become in his mind and in the eyes of his dependents (the only people he sees) the apostle of the coming time—as frantic as any fanatic Mormonite latter-day man or such-like cattle. He has been holding forth in the college in this strain for many years; has been suspended five years ago, and now the clerical party, Beugnot and Co., have undertaken a crusade against him. They could do nothing directly, but there had been great complaints from the police about political cries in and after his lessons. The minister sent stenographers to take down a few lessons, had them printed, and distributed them amongst us to ask if we were satisfied with this manner of teaching. These lessons were deplorable rhapsodies, mostly sheer nonsense, in ill-conditioned phrases, unconnected, striving for originality and attaining a sort of fantastic madness.

The college invited Michelet to defend himself in a sitting we were to hold. He refused at first. To a second sitting he came; declaimed furiously against Barthélemy, the administrator of the college, as his personal enemy, and read us a long written lesson on our incapacity of judging him and his method and doctrine. Old Biot then undertook to expose to him, in a sort of paternal tone, our objections to his lectures, saying that they were no lessons, they gave no instruction, they had no method—in short, they were nothing; that his professorship was not intrusted to him for beating a great drum to make himself popular by stirring up passions, etc. He was rather taken aback. He is unable to discuss, and kept saying that we could not understand his method. At last we voted that we were not satisfied with his explanations (which is the official term for disapproving one of our members), but that there was no necessity for appealing to the minister. However, the minister suspended his lectures (but he goes on paying him). The fact is we should have defended him, whatever might have been his opinions, if his lessons had not been an outrage to common sense. They are utterly indefensible in any literary court, whatever may be the judges' opinion on politics or religion; they are the ravings of a man who has lost his reason in search of popularity. I, for my own part, being little friendly to the Catholic party, was very little flattered to have to vote for what they wished; but there was no help.

I know you like to hear from Germany, but I can give you little news. I have almost given up reading German newspapers, so desolate and hopeless is the state of things. The princes are quarrelling at Dresden about their private matters—how much each of them is to have of votes or influence; as to the nation, there is no more question of its interests amongst them than if they were a family of Jews dividing the property of their respected defunct parent. The best they can arrive at is the re-establishment of the old stupid diet of Frankfort—a thing which has been dead for many years, and tumbled to pieces three years ago. But under any form they may adopt it will be the absolute government of Austria, as the Prussians, by their vacillating politics, have lost the battle; and the time is coming in which the smaller states will find their peddling domestic tyrants too much to be borne, and rather be incorporated with Austria than tolerate this double layer of despotism. All these princes have shown themselves equally incapable and egoistic; they

have proved that they are the great hindrance to the nation, and, as the "poor old King of Würtemberg" (as you call him) told me five years ago—Do you think that Germany will for ever suffer thirty-eight governments?

I am little enough of a revolutionary, but this state of things is enough to make one swear and do unreasonable things; only I am afraid Germany will perish in the attempt to right itself, and become like Poland, or rather like Italy. But what is the use of reasoning and speculating on things which look so hopeless, at least from afar? When I am in Germany I cannot believe that it will perish, but from here it seems a hopeless case. I wish I had something less lugubrious to tell you than these eternal politics, but there happens very little. M. Roulin has lost his only sister, Charles's mother; this has thrown him very much back in his health; he looks miserable. The rest of our friends are going on swimmingly, the Americans almost madly, so wild are they with the life here. I wonder they have a leg to stand upon. To-morrow is Crincrinopolis here; some horrid piano lady from Germany is to perform, and my wife has invited, I believe, half the town. I hope some thousands of them are laid up with *grippé*, else the house will come down. Curse the pianos most particularly! I think the wretch who invented them will have to render a fearful account in some warm place which shall be nameless. People talk of murderers, but what are a few people more or less compared to the venom which this fellow has engrafted on a series of generations, to make miserable young ladies while they learn to thump on his vile invention, and to drive crazy old people when the learning is done, and must be shown and exhibited? I hope you are able to make out this scribble; but if you cannot, and wish to hear about us, you must just step over the Channel and establish yourself in the old place, which I hope will soon come to pass. God bless you, my dear Hilly.

Rue du Bac, May 2, 1851.

They are, of course, gone to some abominable screeching and scratching, and so I want to console myself with a little talk with you, although I hardly know what to tell you. We are in so absurd a state, that no description can give an idea of it, the more so as all is very quiet, and nothing passes outwardly. But they are all conspiring, mostly against themselves—the president against the constitution, the red people against the president, the Carlists against the

republic, the Orleanists against the rest—and making innumerable combinations which are very like the strange palaces I have seen my little nephews in Heidelberg build with little pieces of wood. Guizot, Duchâtel, and Montalivet want to combine with M. de Noailles and M. de Pastoret, and the oldest of all, M. de Lévis, to unite the Legitimists and the Orleanists for the purpose of continuing Bonaparte for four years, and then send him about his business, and reinstate Henri V. and his successors the Orleanists. It is about as queer a mess as well can be expected. Thiers' hobby is the regency, and no Bourbon. Lamartine's is Bonaparte, with himself as minister —a hopeful scheme. There will be no revision of the constitution, as there will not be a sufficient majority for it, and as the president has no notion of going out like an ill-snuffed candle, there will be a *coup d'état.* Where, and how, he himself don't know, most likely; the plans change every day. It is altogether a sweet prospect. I asked yesterday Beugnot, one of the Burgraves, if he could form a conjecture about what was to happen, and he said not only he could not, but nobody could, and *le hasard décidera.*

I have my hands full of work, but mostly of an unprofitable kind —fighting in committees and making reports, or books to be printed or refused. I am fighting against all sorts of pretenders, speculators, humbugs, etc.; but it is a thankless business, and I am only getting by it plenty of enemies, and the reputation of a sort of anthropophagus and *croquemitaine,* and I should not wonder if I was one fine morning found in the Seine. However, I will go on till they change the manner in which they give encouragement to authors, or rather editors, of scientific works; it is all calculated to blow out the books to monstrous sizes and prices. Old Cotta had a proverb which he applied often to himself—that what one wishes for in youth, one has too much of in old age. I am getting gradually into the marrow of this wise speech. When I came here as a greenhorn I wished I had a part of the patronage of the Government in learned matters, but I begin to have enough of it and to spare, particularly because it is all done in committees, which are hotbeds of quarrels and infallible means of imperfect execution. But I forget that you want news from Germany. But alas and alas! what can be said? The old diet, reaction, disunion; no rational want of the nation, even in non-political matters, satisfied; the pretensions of the nobility re-exhumed, and the princes believing that this may go on by the help of Austria

and Russia. It is a lamentable state of things. Here the lower classes exact more rights than they have knowledge to exercise reasonably, but in Germany they are denied a part of the rights which are anterior and above all legislation—the right to marry as they please, and to exercise their industry in the best manner they can. Unfortunately, the difficulties are so great and the evil is so complicated, that it can be overcome only by a revolution; and, as things now are, this would either be suppressed by Austria and Russia, or carried out by a violent and absolute party. If there should be a new revolution here, there will be a European war, complicated by popular movements in Germany; if Bonaparte is continued or re-elected, there will be an intolerable despotism in Germany. It is a seemingly hopeless case, because there is no provision made for a gradual development of the wants of the nation. It is very like Italy, and Russia may become the Austria of Germany, until it is seized itself by the revolution.

I hear from my wife that you are inundated with democraws, as Haug, Kinkel, etc. Do not allow yourself to be devoured with these people. Kinkel is a man of some talent. There has been published a life of him, with a queer and very long story about his marriage. It is by friends of his. I don't recollect it well, but it was very strange. He used, long before 1848, when professor in Bonn, to go to the villages around and preach socialism to the peasants, and tell them that the forests of the state were theirs, and other good doctrines, so that one day they made an attempt on Bonn, bringing with them their wives and children, and provided with sacks to carry the goods and chattels of the villainous *bourgeoisie*. He fled and went to Baden during the insurrection, and was taken there and put in prison, where he was, I believe, cruelly used till his wife got means to deliver him. I don't know him myself, but have heard in Bonn much about him. For years he passed here for a weak and vain man. As to Haug, he is a very weak man, constantly changing his plans. He wished first to go into the army, then he planned a colony in Patagonia, then went to Rome to fight against the Neapolitans, then to Constantinople, from where he wrote to me that he was going to Persia, but, instead, came back here, and to England.

I have no confidence whatever in the man. Don't allow your good nature to take for gospel all the pretensions of the exiled people. There is a great deal of chaff amongst them; and even the best have a wonderful lack of wisdom, or, rather, common sense.

But I must bring this scribble to an end. Don't reproach yourself when you do not answer. I know you are more beset with letters than is reasonable. Only allow me to talk to you from time to time as if you were sitting in one of the big red chairs.

Paris, June 6, 1851.

I intended to write to you almost every day; but I don't know how it is, I cannot do my own work and hardly think my own thoughts, so much crowds upon me. You know we are going to Vichy at the beginning of July, and should think, I almost said hope, your health must require a good draught from the *Hôpital*, and a dozen or two bottles from the *grande Grille*. There is nothing new here amongst your acquaintances and admirers. The Burnoufs always ask very kindly after you; they say that you are quite like a French woman, which sounds funny to my ears, but means nothing but their high approbation. I have never been gratified with a similar compliment. They always say that I am an *Allemand doublé d'Anglais*. Miladi is very well, and deeply immersed in all sorts of ghost-stories and mesmerism. She is a very good-natured creature. I always laugh at her ghosts and crystal balls, etc., and what is worse—at Oxford. Happily, I have never been at Cambridge, so I have a pretext for not speaking of it. I can hardly write, because puss is putting her paw on my paper; she has already splashed the ink over the beginning. As we are alone here, she is become very sociable, and sits on my back while I am writing, or before me and crows to be stroked.

You have, I suppose, read this fine story of the president's speech at Dijon, which the ministers dared not to print in the *Moniteur* without falsifying it. It is a Government as if it were a parcel of schoolboys; and the wonderful part of it is, that this nation, without being forced and coerced to it, will re-elect the same man again, and against the law, because these millions of electors know no other name but that of a prince. If it was any other who should happen to be there, they would continue him just as certainly. I am convinced that the republic would have an infinitely better chance with an electoral law admitting only a million of voters. It is not conceivable how any good can come from giving political power into hands that are unfit to use it, and as long as M. Laurent shall be elector I am sure that the election will be absurd. The lower classes are

extremely quiet, and you don't feel at all that sort of political electricity which precedes here an outbreak. The reason is simple enough; the red people have a great interest that all should remain quiet till the election, and take care not to irritate and provoke their natural adherents. There is certainly more reason for discontent than under Louis Philippe. But all this is only an episode in the great drama of which none of us will see the end. I am afraid our difficulties here will be drowned in a war, if the emperors and kings have the courage to begin one. It would be a great crime *de lèse humanité*, but I don't think they will mind this much if they believe that it will secure their power for another generation; not that they are individually worse than their neighbours, but there is mixed with their interests a certain fanaticism which had in older times an echo around them, but is now quite gone, except perhaps in Russia.

Friday.

I have just got your very kind letter. My eyes are quite well again, and have never been so bad as not to be able to read your hand.

Ampère is become like the Wandering Jew; he is living in a *hôtel garni*, and not to be tempted to make an establishment. He has sold the greater part of his books, and did not even take the pains to choose himself what was to be sold, but had it done by some friends. I suppose he will go on wandering about until he settles at Rome, or dies somewhere in an inn. However, he is quite happy and contented for the moment, only he will repent of it when he becomes older. It is the result of an ill-arranged life. He attached himself to Madame Récamier for the twenty best years of his life, and now she is gone he is like a bird on a branch, and does not know what to do with himself. It passes my comprehension.

* *

It was in this spring that, as I have said, we first had the happiness of making M. and Madame Mohl's acquaintance in Paris. After our return to London she wrote the following note to my mother:—

21, York Terrace, Regent's Park.

DEAR MRS. SENIOR,

Are you in London? I should like much to go and see you all, but not to have a dismal-looking person open the door and

say, "Master's in Scotland, missus is in Wales." These misfortunes happen so often to me during the week or ten days I am in London, that I have made up my mind to trouble my acquaintance with a letter, which has another advantage, viz. if they don't want to be plagued with visits they have nothing to do but *not* to answer. I then conclude they are out of town, as that is more agreeable to my vanity, and I don't trouble them with rat-tats. If you are here, will you give my compliments to Mr. Senior and the young ladies, married and single? and believe me,

Yours most truly,
MARY MOHL.

Her first appearance at our house—where she afterwards spent a few days or more almost every year—was at a dinner-party, and every one was charmed with her. Phillips, the artist, was especially struck by the variety and animation of her countenance. There was nothing very remarkable in her dress at that time (for many people wore their hair in curls), except perhaps the fluffy cap, which dated from ten years earlier, the *bonnet à la folle*, which is described as the height of fashion in Balzac's and Bernard's novels. Out of doors she always continued to wear a large bonnet with a loose lace veil. She also always wore a shawl, then a universal fashion; in short, whoever will take the trouble of looking at a fashion-book of the time of Louis Philippe may see what this famous costume of Madame Mohl's was like. As time went on it became more unusual, for in fashion to stand still is to become eccentric. She was always handsomely dressed in the evening—in silk, or more often satin, black, grey, or mauve—and I remember one dress, a sort of bright chestnut colour, which she called *les cheveux de la Reine*, and which was quite beautiful. She could not bear heavy materials. In 1870 Mrs. Grote gave her a violet velvet, but she had it made up only out of gratitude to the donor, and as soon as she returned to Paris converted it into chair-covers.

She was in London only for a few days, to see the Exhibition, in 1851, on her way to Cold Overton; after which she rejoined M. Mohl in Paris, where things were working up to a crisis. He wrote in September to Miss Bonham Carter—

September 1, 1851.

MY DEAR HILLY,

We are here as listless as possible; nobody knows what is to come, and the life of the nation ebbing away, in this uncertainty. The best workmen are emigrating because there is no work for them, and the worst are conspiring. All this would be at an end in a moment as soon as there was a government which promised some stability; but if it goes on so, the desperation of the nation will drive it to some military despotism. But it is useless to talk about it; everybody's brain seems worn out by thinking on it. What can a country expect which has a pretender for a president, and a government which conspires against the law? It is a thing to be wondered at, and a warning to nations.

The expedition on the Lower Euphrates, which I have set on foot, is ready to set out. Sauley, whom I wanted at the head of it, refuses now, I don't know by what fancy, and the minister has given it to Longpérier (I don't know if you have seen here this lengthy specimen of learning). It is perhaps the best he could do; but Sauley was the real man, and I proposed the whole plan only after having persuaded him. If Longpérier has the courage to affront the marshes and deserts of Chaldea, we shall exhume some enormous towns of extreme antiquity. I am afraid he will linger about Babylon.

September 10.

This scrap of writing has become interrupted, and is become old and stale. I will try at last to finish it at once. The Euphrates expedition has broken down again. Longpérier refuses it because madame will not allow it, which is very proper, as the poor lady is afraid of becoming blind. Then León Faucher (the minister of interior) sent Vitet, in his desperation, to me, to get him out of the slough. I advised him to take Fresnel, which will be done, at least so it seems; but we are not yet at the end.

The M. Jeanron to whom the following letter refers was

a painter, for whom the Mohls had a great respect. He saved the Louvre from the rabble in 1849.

Madame Mohl to Miss Bonham Carter.

My principal reason for making haste to write is that M. Jeanron declares he has made some wonderful discovery in painting, which you alone are to hear and to profit of; and I do say that, if you have any feeling, you should try and come, if only for a month, as soon as you can. The poor man has so little to rejoice at in life, that it would be like a drop of water to the poor "rich man" in hell. Pity don't seem to have been a much indulged feeling upstairs in those days; it is a modern sentiment, I believe.

MARY MOHL.

From Julius Mohl.

November, 1851.

I intended many a time writing to you without doing it. It is Friday evening, and the crocodiles are beginning to come; but I, not being very useful in that department, will take it easy and have some talk with you. We are tolerably well here; my wife is even astonishingly well and strong, and bears walking better than I have ever seen her.

We are in a most curious political state—just what was to be expected, from having taken a pretender as president of a republic. All parties will rue that they have not tried to establish a moderate republic, which was just a possible thing; but, forsooth, the red must have it socialist, the Orleans must have the Prince of Joinville, etc. If they had taken Cavaignac, we might at least have seen if it were possible, although the entire want of municipal institutions makes it very doubtful; but the state we have been in has no name in history. The wonder is that it has gone on so long; but now it is altogether out of joint, and cracks everywhere, although there is no passion anywhere but in the Elysée, in the Chamber, and in the lowest rabble. I called about a week ago at Thiers' on an evening, and found them there in great emotion, exasperated at what had just passed in the Chamber, expecting that very night a *coup d'état*—so much so that all the deputies who were there set off at ten o'clock to pass the night at the Chamber, and to defend it against a military occupation. I was so astounded at the turmoil that I rubbed my eyes and

pinched myself to be sure that I was not asleep, and Mignet, who came in, was like me perfectly astounded, and kept repeating, "Mais tout cela est du mille et une nuits, vous rêvez mes amis, c'est la phantasmagorie," and so it was, nobody attacked them; but, on the other side, nobody would have wondered greatly if they had been attacked, because we all know the plans which are pressed on the president, and the speeches which his familiars make everywhere. Everybody takes these things very coolly; the most important laws which the Chamber may make excite no interest, as everything is looked upon as only provisional, to be overturned by an accident, or usurpation, or civil war, or anything else which we wait for as resignedly as a Trappist on his death. The president has at last so split up the Chamber and broken up the parties that he has gained considerably over his enemies there; but in the same time he has disgusted everybody, and, except a few needy generals over head and ears in debt, and some candidates for prefectures, nobody cares a straw for him. If he becomes an usurper, he is the strangest one which has ever been seen; but it may happen, and is very likely to happen.

November 27.

I have been called off to do the civil to the congregation as far as it lies in me, and the letter has been neglected. I have just got yours, with some capital stories. I know no news, only I am afraid to come to great shame with the Mesopotamian expedition, which has been undertaken on my recommendation, and is likely to fail by Fresnel's delays and old-womanish proceedings.

Nothing good from Germany. These princes behave infamously, and will pay for it next time, which is a satisfaction, but a costly one, and very dangerous. It seems to me to be the beginning of a strife like the Reformation, and I am afraid that it will split and ruin the country, so that it will become a prey to Russia, or something like Italy. As to the princes, you ask what can be done to mend them. You know Pope used to swear by the formula, "God mend me!" but a hackney coachman answered, "Mend *you?* why, He'd sooner make two new ones." That is my opinion of the German princes; they must all be cast out except one, only we don't know where to find this one. How do you think England would fare if the heptarchy came to life again?

Moritz is fighting tooth and nail at Stuttgardt, but it can come to nothing, and if he should persuade the Chamber and the country, it would only bring a brutal occupation by Austria, as it happened in Hesse. The diet is for the moment a sort of Star Chamber which puts itself above the law. The consequence seems infallible—either the nation will perish if it submits, or the diet will perish at the first opportunity of rising against it. It is a hideous prospect; but as human affairs do not progress logically, it will be a long struggle with various success, and perhaps no decided result. But I must finish. God bless you, my dear Hilly.

Yours very truly,
J. MOHL.

The expected *coup d'état* occurred within a week. Here is Madame Mohl's account of it:—

December 10, 1851.

DEAR HILLY,

I am low-spirited; it's nothing. I am like a tree torn up by the roots. I can't get accustomed to believe this possible; but it is absurd to talk for ever of one's feelings. I will answer question one. There was not one stone out of its place in the Rue du Bac, it was the cue of these people to give out that all Paris was full of barricades. Now, I was out the best part of the three first days—Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. I did not certainly go to the places where barricades generally begin, viz. Rue St. Martin, St. Denis, and their tributaries; but I went not very far off, and saw none. François, who was everywhere, saw a few a foot high. You must put it into your head that the Elysée system is to frighten each party by the other, and unfortunately they all lend themselves too well to the system. For instance, François tells me of the monstrous iniquity of many being said to have joined this fellow, who in reality protested against him. But how can they make that known? When they go to the newspapers to request the publication, they are told that they can't publish a word. Even under Bonaparte the censure was less absolute. The president actually had printed on the walls and in his papers, as his councillors, some who were in prison. Nine of his ex-ministers dined together at the prison of Mazas. But I can't remember half the stories I hear; and I receive letters

from all quarters, which I have not time to answer. I am going out this morning to take a ride to get up my spirits. But be assured that the town is as safe as London, providing you keep your thoughts entirely to yourself if they have anything honest in them, and if you choose to go to the Elysée, you will make your fortune. This is what cuts me to the quick; it is the horrible demoralizing effect this will have on a nation too apt to care for nothing but success. The people one sees are divided into two classes: one, like myself, ill with indignation and discouragement; the other, people who say, "What a good thing! This will save us from the reds and the socialists." Nobody cares or even pretends to be a partisan of L. N. They only rejoice that a hundred thousand soldiers will keep them safe from the democracy. I do not think this feeling can last; but many of those who live in the country declare their property was already divided in their own minds by the peasants. I believe this terror very absurd; but alas! that the democratic government of '48 should have given such a good ground for it; for there is no disguising the fact that all France would have risen like one man against this, were it not for the recent terror of these socialists and democrats. They say it was absurd; but general terror is always founded on something that first inspired it. In 1830, when the well-educated and the middling and lower classes fought side by side against the silly usurpations of Charles X., they never dreamt of these fears of each other. They had both the same wish for moderate freedom; but during eighteen years a large body of scribbling individuals have done nothing but work at sowing false notions, which have absolutely destroyed all reasonable public opinion. This makes me fear this system will last some years, unless some lucky shot puts an end to it; but it is strange to see how seldom such rascals are well aimed at, Henry IV. was killed so easily, and Bonaparte seemed to bear a charmed life.

François told me nine hundred people were arrested Thursday night. Mind, I give you each authority, because I know nothing for certain, except what is in our own experience. M. Thiers is out of prison on condition he will go to Italy for his health. Mr. Mohl went to the (Mazas) prison on Monday night at half-past nine, and was told they were all in bed. I sent to Mignet Tuesday morning to ask how Thiers was. My maid saw heaps of packed trunks at Mignet's, he told her he had not time to answer, he was in such a

hurry. The servants said he was going to travel. It can't be for long, as he is secretary to one of the five academies, and (I should think) can't afford to lose his place. Government in ordinary times cannot displace him; but these people care nought for law or old usages, therefore they may just as well send a regiment to the Institut and disperse it altogether. The discourses Mr. Mohl brings me from it are very disgusting, not half are indignant; the larger half, say it saves them from the socialists. Everybody agrees there never was such tyranny, but they don't care for politics. They must be quiet in their houses and property. All this you know is the effect of your friends the demagogues. They have done the same in Germany, and, except Piedmont, in all Europe.

Madame Mohl was disgusted at the way in which the news of the *coup d'état* was received in England.

January 1, 1852.

DEAREST COZ,

I enclose the seal of your letter. It strikes me that it had been opened, and *re*-shut with red sealing-wax. Tell me if it is as you put it. I have received two lately which had been opened. I shall, therefore, be more cautious when I write by post; this goes by private hand, and, therefore, I am comfortable.

You know I never had a good opinion of Lord Palmerston, therefore what you say don't make much difference. The thing that vexes me most is that any English should not be indignant at this horrible tyranny. Mr. Mohl knows a young German (a very nice one) who is tutor to a great Russian lady, who came this morning and told him that several great Russian ladies having spoken pretty freely, they were desired by Government to take care what they said, or they would be sent away. They complained to their ambassador, who went to Morny and said it was very impertinent, and that in Russia people might say what they pleased, provided they did not conspire. The lady was rather puzzled how these discourses were known at the Elysée, and at last found out she had spoken freely in some great lady's house (a French lady). She sent word that she should no longer go there, as one must watch one's words. Fact is, *I* am too free-spoken, and I must take a little more care. It is the oddest thing to me that English people should believe all the lies in

the papers, when they know everything is dictated by the Elysée. As to the socialists, I suppose it is not L. N.'s mighty arm that protects us, and the same who did in June might now; but the nation is paralyzed with the absurd want to be quiet—as if this could last any time! I heard cannons firing all the morning for joy at the success of this wretch. I feel like poor Hamlet—the world is distasteful to me when I see vice and impudence tower above all. Mrs. C—— told me Lord Palmerston had written to L. N. to felicitate him, and *that* immediately after the council of ministers had agreed to be entirely neutral. Lord Palmerston is a very *brouillon*—likes to put himself forward, and thinks he has all England to back him; he has done so many times, and the other ministers have borne it. They, I suppose, knocked against this more than usual. If we have ten years *war*-shed in consequence of this fellow (which I should not wonder at), I wonder what the English will say then, and whether they will think it such a fine thing! He *must* employ the soldiers, and occupy the French; he *must* administer to their passions, and there is no way but war. C—— was here an hour ago. They have put the eagle on the standard to-day, and a slight word was said in some Government statement about the *present* frontier. This is a preparation. Poor England's blood will be spilt in the cause of freedom, I fear.

Her love for England never wavered. I remember once quoting in reference to it the lines from "The Pinafore"—

> "In spite of all temptations
> To belong to other nations,
> He remains an Englishman,"—

and she laughed heartily, and said it was very appropriate. She says in another letter to Miss Bonham Carter—

Heaven grant old England may do well. I would die to-morrow thankfully for her—a dear old thing. I often quote a verse of Corneille's, "Albe, mon cher pays et mon premier amour." When I land there I am always on the point of kissing the dear free earth, only I'm afraid of being ridiculous. And yet I'd rather live *here*. Is it not absurd to the highest degree?

Like her favourite, Dr. Johnson, Madame Mohl was a

good hater, and the effect of the *coup d'état* was to add to the brilliancy of her *salon;* for the most distinguished and cultivated men in France shared her enmity against Louis Napoleon, and enjoyed more than ever meeting each other.

We continued to visit Paris every spring. Mr. Senior was a corresponding member of the Institut, and we had no reason to complain of want of hospitality in the French. Many of the remarkable men of that time had long been our friends, such as Guizot, Tocqueville, Corcelle, Rémusat, Say, Beaumont, etc.; but Madame Mohl was our mainstay. When we first arrived she would ask us whom we particularly desired to see, and whether we knew them already or not she was sure to get them to meet us. She was a very early riser, and would often tap at the door of our apartment between nine and ten o'clock, and sit down and talk to us while we were at breakfast. Hers was real conversation, not preaching. It was spontaneous, full of fun, information, and grace of expression. She spoke French and English with the fluency and accent of a native, yet with the care and originality of a foreigner. (My authority for saying this of her French was Alexis de Tocqueville.) When there was no word in either language exactly to fit her thoughts she would coin one for the occasion. She had much of the phraseology of the last century, but none of its coarseness, for she had an essentially delicate and refined nature. Though a great reader she had, as Madame Arconati said, not an atom of dogmatism or pedantry. She had no airs of superiority of any kind. Although her opinions on people and things were extraordinarily tolerant and unconventional, she yet had a fine sense of moral rectitude and high principle which made her a perfectly safe friend for young people. I never heard her say a word or utter a sentiment which I should shrink from recording here could I only recollect it. Conversation is unfortunately as ephemeral as acting or singing; my father recorded a

great deal of hers in his journals, but, as she herself says of Madame Récamier, "such recollections have much the same effect on those who knew her that a *hortus siccus* of tropical flowers would have on a traveller just returned from seeing them in their native country." Still, such as they are they are valuable, for although so light and full of fancy there was solid matter in her conversation—it was not mere froth; she had thought much and read much, besides having always lived in the intimacy of the most brilliant and remarkable men and women of her time.

On Friday evenings the lamps in the little *salon* of the Rue du Bac were carefully shaded, for M. Mohl was intolerant of a blaze of light, as indeed he was of glare and display of any kind. He used to be very sarcastic if any lady arrived smartly dressed, which was often the case, as Madame Duchâtel received on the same evening all the rank and fashion of the Orleanist party.

One evening Sanson, the great actor, who had exchanged the stage for the post of teacher at the Conservatoire, told us all sorts of amusing stories about his pupils, especially of Rachel, whom he discovered and trained. Guizot, Cousin, and Mignet were present, and it was pleasant to see them retire gracefully into the background and leave the arena to the old actor, whom they encouraged by their attention and sympathy.

M. Mohl was too busy to give much attention to general society, but whenever he appeared he was highly appreciated.*

* This is Sainte Beuve's portrait of M. Mohl: "Un homme qui est l'érudition et la curiosité même: M. Mohl, le savant Orientaliste, et plus qu'un savant, un sage! esprit clair, loyal, étendu, esprit allemand, passé au filtre anglais, sans un trouble, sans un nuage, miroir ouvert et limpide, moralité franche et pure, de bonne heure revenu de tout; avec un grain d'ironie sans amertume, front chauve et rire d'enfant, intelligence à la Goethe, sinon qu'elle est exempte de toute couleur et qu'elle est soigneusement depouillée du sens esthétique, comme d'un mensonge."

It is really impossible to translate this delicate and forcible description, but the

He was a most interesting converser. No one told a story so well; all sorts of amusing adventures always seemed to be happening to him; he could not go in an omnibus without something absurd and diverting taking place; his acute sense of fun made everything appear to him in a ludicrous light. With all this he had a sort of childish simplicity and total absence of pretension, in spite, or rather in consequence, of his great ability and learning. He spoke perfect English, but as it was a foreign language he did not use the current expressions—the counters which often stand in the place of ideas. With him, as with his wife, the word exactly fitted the idea. Her conversation was not so full of anecdote, but she had more imagination and higher spirits. She never concealed a thought—out it all came in an instant; while he was not at all deficient in reticence. They married so late that their union never became an old story to either of them. When M. Mohl came into their *salon*, his first impulse was to talk to his wife, to tell her all that had amused and interested him since they last met; she had often to direct his attention to the guests that were present. The society in their own house exactly suited them both, and, like the bees, they wandered, often singly, far and wide to bring back honey to the hive. When they were parted they wrote each other long and amusing letters, half in French and half in English.

Their English friends did not quite understand their visiting England separately; but Paris becomes very hot towards the end of June, and it was better for Madame Mohl's health to leave it, while M. Mohl was tied there on account of his

following may give some idea of it: "M. Mohl, the learned Orientalist, is erudition and investigation itself; he is more than a philosopher, he is wisdom personified! His intellect is clear, sincere, and liberal, thoroughly German, passed through an English filter; an untroubled cloudless spirit, a mirror without speck or flaw; a spotless character, having early cast aside the illusions of youth; a spice of irony without bitterness, the bald brow of a sage with the laugh of a child. His mind in some respects resembles that of Goethe, except that it is free of all bias, avoiding carefully, in his devotion to truth, the snare of æstheticism."

occupations; nor would he have enjoyed the London season, with its large parties and dissipation, whereas his wife enjoyed everything intensely in its turn. She delighted in the theatre, which he abhorred. "Isn't it convenient?" she used to say. "I put all the money we can spare for the play into this box, and, as Mr. Mohl can't bear going, I spend it all on myself." She used to say that she longed to be an actress, and to perform the part taken by Madame Alain in "La Joie fait Peur." She would have acted well; she had all the gesture and vivacity of a southerner, and it was delightful to hear her recite one of La Fontaine's fables. She was a very bad walker by day, but she always felt stronger at night, and we often trudged through the streets of Paris on our return from the theatre, walking rapidly (for she never did anything slowly) and in the highest spirits, her nose not assailed as mine was by the abominable odours of the Rue du Bac. She had no sense of smell, although all her other senses were extraordinarily acute. She never lost her hearing, and her sight was very little impaired to the last.

Although she was very fond of music, she neither played nor sang. Above all others she loved Italian music, especially singing. One evening I went with her to a private concert where there was no other kind of music. "Oh, my dear," she said, "I thought I was in heaven!" She did not care for difficult instrumental music. Once, when a lady had been playing very noisily and brilliantly, and I thought Madame Mohl had been having a great treat, as soon as we had left the house she burst out with, "Oh, what an abominable noise that woman did make!"

Everything loud and big, coarse and unfinished, was disagreeable to her; her taste was for things small and delicate like herself. She had even a prejudice against tall women. She was very fond of beauty, and always said that she could not bear ugly people, but I noticed that when she liked people

she never thought them ugly; she said there was a *grace* about them—one of her favourite expressions. She was as capricious as a spoilt child, yet, until advanced age impaired her self-control, she never allowed her whims to interfere with the comfort of others. She was blessed with a good though hasty temper, and an unusual amount of common sense which made her see the absurdity of extravagant pretensions of any kind. She liked intensely, as she did everything else. One of her droll phrases (I remember her saying it of Mr. Erasmus Darwin among others) was, "My dear, I am so fond of him that it makes me quite uncomfortable."

There never was a cloud between her and me, but although she was not touchy she was vehement, and she sometimes had little misunderstandings with others whom she loved. This she called being *en délicatesse* with so-and-so. But no one regretted her little outbursts of petulance so much as she did herself. She wrote on one occasion—

Thank your father, my dear, for your happy temper, for it is hereditary, and you don't know the trouble it has saved you. I am naturally of an irritable temper. It was born with me, and though I have worked much to govern it, it has been my bane all my life, and all the self-government in the world, even when successful, can only save outward appearances; the inward man suffers, and loses power by it.

And again to Miss Bonham Carter at another time, when she had a misunderstanding with Madame Arconati, afterwards made up by Madame Collegno—

A good temper is an admirable gift of God's, for no reasoning will give it. One only learns to govern a moderate one, and that's an absorption of energy that might do something else; however, it's no use philosophizing on the subject. If by my pettishness I have lost a kind friend, I must even bear it, and not complain; for she is as pettish as I am, and much more touchy, and I know it, and should have minded my manners.

Until her marriage, in 1859, Mademoiselle Ida used to make tea in the smaller room, and there was often dancing for the young people in the dining-room. Madame Mohl's *salon* did not resemble the *salons* of former days, where only a chosen few were admitted. She was careful as to the residents in Paris, for, as she said, it was not like an evening by special invitation. Once invited to her Fridays, you might always go, and it was almost impossible to dislodge a bore; and she felt the duties of hospitality so acutely that she tried to amuse even bores, but the effort fatigued her. She writes of some lady in Paris whom she did not care to know—

"I avoid increasing my lady acquaintances, unless they particularly take my fancy. I know more than I want to know. They take up so much room in my small apartment; and I have an old-fashioned principle that, when a lady does come to my house, she must and ought to be paid attention to; therefore I try to have her amused if I can, and sometimes talk to stupid people that she may have the clever ones. It's all very well to do that for favourites, but it's a hard case to do it for those I don't care about. I think it but justice to my own dear self to tell you all this, that you may understand why I am backward in making acquaintance with ladies. In London no one comes unless invited; here you are at their mercy on public nights. I have known ladies change their nights with infinite trouble to get rid of some of these, whom they had nothing to say against. Society to me is a real pleasure, not a mere habit, and for that reason those that give me none bore me."

But, unless she took up one of these aversions, she was general in her tastes. She liked variety, and she constantly told us to send our English friends to her (she wrote, "Pray, if you have any niceies—a new substantive—send them to me"), for she was anxious to show her gratitude for the kindness she received in London. Her evening circle was large, usually much too large for any one man to stand by the mantelpiece and harangue the company. When this was possible it was extremely delightful; but general conversation seldom took

place, except after a small dinner or a breakfast. Consequently these small meetings by invitation were far more interesting than the ordinary Friday evenings; and when she wanted us to meet any one in particular, it was always by invitation at breakfast or dinner. Nothing could be more agreeable than these little parties. I never saw anything to complain of in the food, although there was no pretence at delicacies. Madame Mohl had an excellent old servant, Julie, who was a very fair cook, and who tyrannized over her. I remember she on one occasion wanted to have two dinner-parties in a week, and she ran out of the room to ask Julie's leave, and returned in triumph, saying, "Julie says I *may* have them." The company was always carefully chosen—never too many for the table; nor did she ever, as is said in the *Journal des Débats*, put husband and wife side by side. Sometimes there was an empty place with Ivan Tourguénieff's name upon it, for he had an Eastern habit of breaking engagements (when he came, however, he was so delightful that one forgave his eccentricities); but none of her other guests ever failed her, as far as I can remember. Nor can I ever recollect her appearing at her own house in the evening in the gown she had worn all day. She always dressed herself to receive her guests as she did when she went out to dine or to tea. When she was on the borders of ninety she became more negligent; but she gave up her Friday evenings after M. Mohl's death, and never had the heart to resume them, and those who called on her in the evening were unexpected, and received without ceremony, but with kindly welcome.

Before 1870 foreigners of all nations—English, Italians, Hungarians, Germans, Swedes, Dutch, Japanese, and other Orientals—brought by M. Mohl, who also contributed the scientific element, met on the same easy terms; and although she hated so bitterly Louis Napoleon ("cet homme," or "le monsieur," she called him; never "celui-ci," as most people

did, and never "the emperor"), she admitted some who had gone over partially to the enemy, such as Kergorlay and Prosper Mérimée. The latter was, however, one of her oldest friends, and a *témoin* at her marriage. He had a studio alongside of hers in early days, and used to drop in and chat for hours with her. At that time M. de Tocqueville told me Mérimée was exceedingly handsome, with long fair hair curling over his shoulders. One day he appeared in the studio with his arm in a sling, and he told Miss Clarke that he had had a fall. The truth came out, however, that he had fought a duel. A letter of his had been intercepted to some fair lady, whose natural protector, as Mérimée said, "n'aimait pas ma prose." In later years he affected a "phlegme Anglais," and was always delighted if one told him that he looked English. He was a great admirer of Mademoiselle Ida's cleverness and simplicity, and used often to invite the Mohls and ourselves to drink yellow Russian tea in his apartment in the Rue de Sèvres. He was charming on these occasions: he laid aside his cold, cynical manner, and amused us by showing us his drawings and discoursing on the places and people he had seen. There were never any other guests.

In 1871 his house was burnt down by the Commune on account of his relations with the empress.

The most delightful of all the celebrated men who were to be met at Madame Mohl's was Alexis de Tocqueville. As Mrs. Grote said of him, he was made of porcelain throughout. In spite of his great ability and distinction, and his incomparable talent for conversation, he never sought to usurp the first place.

His inexhaustible mind (says Ampère) touched without undue haste or too rapid transition, but with even flow and infinite variety, one subject after another. They succeeded each other without effort, from the most important and logical discussions down to the most piquant anecdotes. Though always perfectly simple, he preserved, in

the most intimate and familiar conversations, the purity of expression and admirable choice of words which was a part of his very nature.

His voice, sweet, low, and varied in its tones, added greatly to the charm of his conversation. He was an equally sympathetic listener, and there was no one to whom he listened more willingly than to another *habitué* of Madame Mohl's, for whom she had the highest respect—M. Guizot. Tocqueville said of him—

> Guizot is always charming. He has an *aplomb*, an ease, a *verve*, arising from his security that whatever he says will interest and amuse. He is a perfect specimen of an ex-statesman, *homme de lettres*, and *père de famille*, falling back on literature and the domestic affections. As for me, I have intervals of *sauvagerie;* or, rather, the times when I am not *sauvage* are the intervals. I easily tire of Paris and long to fly to the fields and woods of my native Normandy.

It is difficult to resist sketching some of the other characters in this remarkable circle—Horace Say, with his charming countenance and delicate wit; Cousin, always brilliant, and enthusiastically in love with Madame de Longueville; Mignet, with his remarkable beauty—he never seemed to listen to a word, yet one felt one's vanity satisfied, for he took so much pains to please the person he selected to listen to *him;* —and many others, but space forbids, and it is necessary to allow Madame Mohl to speak again for herself.

CHAPTER V.

FROM THE COUP D'ÉTAT TO THE CRIMEAN WAR (1852–1854).

Opinions—Receptions at the Institut—Pertz on Stein—Restriction of the press—The Empire coming—Visit to Austria and Hungary—Schloss Hainfeld—Tyrolese travelling—Dinner-party—Madame Ranke's sonnet—Death of Mrs. Martin—Life in London—Life at Cold Overton—Travelling acquaintance—Invalids—Pleasures of convalescence—Indignation at imperial luxury.

THE Duc de Broglie has been quoted as saying that Madame Mohl had no decided opinions. I think the reason of her having produced this impression on him was her great respect for the duke and his family (for his father * she had a perfect veneration), and she probably passed lightly over every subject on which they disagreed. But to most people she was not so reticent, and the vehemence with which her opinions burst out was sometimes a source of great annoyance to herself. She wrote to Miss Bonham Carter—

One's opinions are the most troublesome, noisy, snarling dogs I know. It is like having a pack of hounds in a handsome bedroom when one is visiting, and striving to keep them down, shutting doors and windows that they may not be heard, and now and then an awful "bow-wow" bursts out!

She found it impossible to conceal her disgust at the progress of despotism under Louis Napoleon from those who were favourable to him. She writes to the Miss Haughtons—

* See chap. x.

February 22, 1852.

DEAR CHILDREN,

Brummagem Boney keeps everything in a pretty state here; however, I have my reasons for saying little about it, only don't believe the newspapers; *du reste*, I live very agreeably in spite of it, have some very agreeable acquaintance among the English, who are most abundant this year. My *soirées* are very gay; I wish you were here to dance, poor children. I shall tell your message to Madame C——. I have not been there since the new state, for I am so hot in my opinions that I am shy of seeing people lest I should quarrel with them, which I do in general if they put forth notions contrary to mine. I have a strong suspicion Monsieur G—— (an artist) is not of my opinion, and I'm afraid it is because he has plenty of employment, which has kept me away from them also. I never in my life was intolerant till now, but this would rouse the Seven Sages of Greece. I always thought the absurdities of '48 would bring on a *contre-coup* of absurdity, but this surpasses all my expectations. I was at the reception of M. de Montalembert the other day, he was answered by Guizot. As it is the only public speaking in France, and the only place where there can be anything like freedom, you can't have the slightest conception of the difficulty to get places for those who had tickets, which were demanded seven weeks beforehand. A few allusions intended by the speakers were applauded with frenzy, and, contrary to all precedent, not a single word was said about the powers that be, instead of the regular compliments addressed to them. M. Mohl could not get to his place, and hung his arm over the balustrade as there was no room for it; it reposed on the head of hair of a poor member who could not even get into any place, but was down in a darkish hole of stair which is the passage to come in by, between the centre and the amphitheatre. There was a whole lot of members poked into this hole; never within my remembrance did I see such a *séance*. It is said some English offered three hundred francs for centre tickets. I'm sure I should have been glad to have sold mine for half were it not for decency.

Ever yours tenderly,

M. MOHL.

From Julius Mohl.

June, 1852.

MY DEAR HILLY,

Many thanks for your letter; the sight of your handwriting is like a shower of rain in this fearfully hot weather.

You seem to lead a merry life in London, what with breakfasts and suppers, etc., etc. To make up for this, and in compensation, I am as quiet as a mouse, only sitting in committees daily and eating up my liver in attempts at rooting out abuses. But they are very hard-lived and thorny all over. Do you recollect the man who gives his arm to ladies at the public sittings of the Institut? I find he gets two hundred and forty francs a year to keep him in *manchettes*. As he wears none now, they being out of fashion, I shall cut off the pay. Then the architect gets two hundred and forty francs a year for these same public sittings to see if the upholsterer has spread the carpet on the little staircase *secundum artem*, for which the said upholsterer gets four hundred francs a year, the carpets being ours—he only puts them down. At each sitting there is a locksmith in attendance to see if he is wanted, and a carpenter who gets one hundred and sixty francs a year for putting up a certain piece of wood at the orchestra above the president's head, which piece might be nailed on once for all, or omitted without a soul being the worse for it. But this is only the small fry, and bigger fish are nibbling at our poor substance; *e.g.* we print our works entirely at our own expense, and sell them to Didot for twelve francs a volume, which he retails to the public for forty-two francs, without any risk or advance of capital. We had a fireman who put our coals in the *calorifère*, and got twelve hundred francs a year for it; but now we have made a contract by which a man undertakes to furnish coals and a man for fifteen hundred francs a year, etc.

Little puss has been called for by Madame (what is her name?—Miss Blanche's mother). I quite miss the little thing; it used to come in every morning scampering and begging for milk so passionately; at any rate, it is in good hands. Poor Sacripant has as yet found no master, and old puss is this very moment lying on the carpet growling at him, but too lazy to get up and beat him. The house is topsy-turvy in the highest degree, and for some days so much so that Julie declared she could cook no dinner for me, and the maids dined out.

Miladi has found her match in hobby-horses in an old friend, a Swedenborgian, who has been living with her this last month, and has astonished her ladyship by her wild fancies. For instance, she holds that after death the souls are kneaded up together, and a great man formed out of them, in which every soul is placed in the part which his passions in this world have favoured.

Nothing new here. Mérimée is just in prison to expiate Libia's faults and shortcomings. Government is going on in its old style, only the new legislative institutions do not work well, which is no wonder, and their ingenious inventor sees himself that this won't do; but I defy him to invent something which could live. They are building the Louvre, and have made an awful pit running from the end of the rue Richelieu to the end of the Louvre to lay the foundation of the new gallery. Their extravagance is fearful, and their want of moral sense incredible. So they at last decided to make for Canino a comfortable place as director of the garden of plants, and to give him thirty thousand francs a year. It is an insult to science, which will be deeply regretted when the time will come; but nobody can agree when this will be. A nation is a very stupid concern, and it will require some time before they will feel their degradation sufficiently and generally enough.

To the same.

Paris, August 1, 1852.

I have got your letter and your present, and am grateful for both. The penknives look capital, and will do great execution, I hope; and the pencil is a very nice little wonder, which, by your leave and licence, I shall keep myself, and Laure Burnouf shall not be the worse for it. I will give her something else in your name, as your presents ain't to be given away in this fashion.

I have got to-day a letter from old David, who wishes to be reminded to you. He is in the country at Madame de T——'s, where he passes every year three months amongst a set which is very uncongenial to him, but habit makes that he always goes there. She is *une belle dame* in all the strength of the word, originally very graceful and good-natured, but spoiled as much as possible. He is now printing a translation, in very queer French verse, of a Spanish drama. It is very strange he has no ear whatever, and is fallen in his age on verse-writing—however, it amuses him and does nobody much

harm; but you will have to listen to one of his lucubrations next winter. I shall escape this time, but my wife and you are booked for it. He has read it already to me, and to an old gentlewoman who is as deaf as a post, and was in raptures, not having understood a word of what he read.

Sacripant, the cat, is gone to M. de Bèze, poor fellow! and it seems his good nature has already made him many friends.

Pertz' book on Stein is a very curious and very important book, not for his part in it, but for the documents and letters he prints, and which come hissing hot down on the political snow in Germany. Pertz' sauce is cool enough and stiff enough, but the dish, or rather the meat, is peppery enough for any taste; and then Pertz is, in fact, a liberal-minded man, so there is no suppression or perversion of facts and opinions in it, and the book is such that it must produce a great and very healthy effect in Germany. I have only read two volumes of it.

My wife is, of course, *au spectacle* with miladi.

They have done something almost incredible, even in this incredible state of things. You know that most of the professors for French schools are formed in the École Normale here. The young men get into the École by a preliminary examination; but this year Fortoul has struck out of the list of candidates for entrance every Protestant and every Jew. This, however, would not hold, and the Protestants and Jews have been readmitted. My only hope is that this despotism, if it lasts, will teach the French to cling to the law which they are always so ready to despise and resist. If the monstrous illegality of the present system will produce this effect, it is the best thing that could happen to the country. Meanwhile, things produce their natural effects. The almost entire suppression of the press produces either the reality, or at least the belief in an enormous corruption. Certainly, from the absence of a free press, it will take a much longer time until the country will be filled with these rumours; but it takes at the same time away all means of defending government from calumny. We shall undoubtedly get the Empire, which will be only a humbug the more, but may bring on a war, not instantly, but by gradual irritation, resulting from the mistrust and jealousies it will beget, and which will give this man a pretext for avenging Waterloo, which is one of his fatal ideas, and on which he will split, but God knows with what a train of misery for Europe.

But I must put an end to this scribbling. God bless you, my dear Hilly; do remember me kindly to Mrs. Carter and all your people.

Madame Mohl was exceedingly fond of scenery and travelling, and in the autumn of this year she and M. Mohl and their niece had a delightful tour in Austria and the Tyrol. She wrote from Germany to her American friend, Miss Emma Weston, and, after her return, to the Miss Haughtons and Miss Bonham Carter.

Hainfeld, Styria, September 17, 1852.

DEAR EMMA,

I think you must have read Captain Hall's * account of this place, not that it is very accurate; but still you will have some notion where we are—if not, learn we are about half an hour's drive from Hungary, and something about half-way between Vienna and Trieste. This place belongs to Baron Hammer, a great Orientalist, who has been in correspondence with M. Mohl these fifteen years, but they never met. When he heard we were at Vienna, he wrote to invite us here. We left Vienna on the 14th. We had a beautiful journey from Vienna here, across a mountain called the Simmering (?), especially the southern descent—quite as beautiful as the Salzkammergut. We got to Gratz in one day, and came here in a second day. The old baron was out, and had not told the servants, so we were rather posed, especially on entering the long galleries inside, which looked by lamplight as if all the ghosts in Europe had rendezvoused here, and Ida begged *not* to have a room to herself. The outside you see by the picture; the inside is much more curious, built round a large square court. Behind these arcades are the doors of all the rooms. The first floor has seventy-two rooms, all very large; the ground floor is nothing except the kitchen; all the rest seem like coach-houses or less, with grated windows; but the terrific aspect at night is looking along the gallery, which I may call a cloister, for it's just like one, each side being at a round guess two hundred and fifty feet long—in the twilight they look endless, with only two lamps. At each of the four corners there is a staircase. The rooms were all fitted up about a hundred and forty years ago. The walls

* Captain Basil Hall spent a winter at Schloss Hainfeld with Madame de Purgstall. His amusing book was much read by the last generation.

are four feet thick, and at the towers a great deal more; they are capital hide-and-seek places. When the old baron came back he made us extremely welcome. He is very polite, marshalled me about with a servant, preceding us into the tea-cabinet, as he calls it—the only smallish, not small, room in the house, for it is as large as my best sitting-room without the alcove. There were besides himself a gentleman and his daughter from Heidelberg, whom Ida knew, luckily. The old baron is seventy-nine, and much brisker than any young man I know. He made me walk three hours yesterday, first all over the house, then to a glen so Scotch-looking I thought Madame de Purgstall (Miss Cranstoun) must have made the road to it, but she had never even been in it. I can't make out as much about her as I should like. After fagging me to death, though I liked it much, he went and soused in the river, and sent to Mr. Mohl to come and make conversation with him while he was in the cold water. Then we dined at one, and at four he set off again with all the party except me, and walked them three hours more, till even Ida was very tired. They came back at seven and we drank tea. While they were out I enjoyed a delicious lonely wander about the house. It is so solitary, so large, so amusing, that I could talk with it for a month. There is scarcely a bit of furniture, a bit of wall, that does not say something—they are all queer and old and strange. Even the Herr Baron himself can't, nor very few people, I believe, enjoy the company of an old house as I do. Madame de Purgstall lived here so many years alone, because her son was buried here, who died somewhere about 1820. I can't ask half the questions I should like for fear of treading on gouty toes. The Herr always calls her "my poor friend," and speaks with great attachment of her. He was a distant relation of the family; no near ones remained, and the property was divided among the collateral branches. I think I saw the bell-rope the captain made for the old lady. M. de Hammer was very indignant with Lockhart for implying that he was a sort of dependent of the family, born on the estate, etc., which is a lie. As everybody in Vienna knows, he is the Baron Hammer, and the son of a highly respected and positioned man. This bit in Lockhart I had forgotten, but he showed it me quite in a rage, which I don't wonder at; and Mr. Cranstoun, her brother, was so very angry at Captain Hall's book, which looked if all her relations had abandoned her, whereas he came to see her every

year there. He, I should think, might have set Lockhart to rights about it, but these scribbling people are all afraid of each other, and if a Scotchman does ever such a dirty trick to an un-Scotchman, no Scot will take the part of justice; this I must own in spite of my love for them. The house is full of romance. There is the portrait of one lady who in the last century held the family castle, I know not how long, against the Turks, who possessed Styria at one time, and were often coming ravaging. This is not the family castle, large as it is; it was built for the widows, who must have had pretty handsome dowries to keep it up. The castle (fighting) is on a rock looking like Arthur's Seat. We were to go and see it to-day, but the rain prevented us; it is very beautiful at this distance, and the heroine built all sorts of fortifications. This castle had a moat round it—I suppose to defend the widows, for it was at least sixty feet broad; but the Cranstouns had it filled up forty years ago, and it is now about six feet deep, filled with grass and drained. Madame de Purgstall's portait here represents her as a handsome woman. If you remember, she was Walter Scott's confidant in his first love. Oh, what would I have given to hear the old lady's own account of that matter instead of Lockhart's puppyish hints! Perhaps you think it great nonsense to talk so much of this old place, but it has taken such complete hold of my imagination, I can't think with vivacity of anything else. However, one must part with one's dearest, and we shall leave this Monday, 20th, go across mountains and beautiful (bad) roads to Tyrol and a place called Meran. We shall see nothing but mountains for eight or ten days, which will be a great delight. We shall be in Paris between the 1st and 5th. . . .

I enjoyed Vienna a good deal. We went six times to the theatre, two of which were the opera, but in that I was disappointed. The actors at the Burg-Theater, answering to the Théâtre Français, are some of them capital. We saw a proper comedy, really taken from the manners of the country, and how I did laugh! I managed to understand it. Nowhere have I seen people enjoy the drama as these, but, contrary to the French and English, they enjoy the good old plays most. Schiller's "Maid of Orleans" and Lessing's "Nathan the Wise" had overflowing audiences—in such uncomfortable places I was astonished, so hot and so attentive. It was beautiful to see, but I enjoyed the modern comedy by a Viennese author much more; indeed, I have never seen more genuine comedy better acted in

Paris or London, and I had the great drawback of only understanding half. I believe the taste for this delightful amusement is in a better state in Vienna than in any town in Europe. Not so the music; they scream worse than in France, and I heard the Huguenots with thorough disgust. If Meyerbeer was hung he would only have his deserts. I have just learnt that Mrs. Trollope, when she was here, said to some one who gave her information about the Academy to put in her book, "I must show it to Prince Metternich, and if he approves I'll put it in." Nothing could exceed the civility of the Metternichs to her, all owing to the success of her book upon America; however, you richly deserved it, and I easily believe she is the first writer of travels there who expressed a horror of the way you all behaved to the slaves.

To the Miss Haughtons.

Paris, November 1, 1852.

MY DEAR CHILDREN,

I have not written sooner because I have been wandering ever since June 12. I then went to England. I remained six or seven weeks among my friends in town and country, and then came back about July 27; then I made preparations for a long journey, having but one week to do them, and we set off the 4th for Germany, picked up Ida on the road at Heidelberg, and hurried on to Stuttgart, where we spent two days only, our chief *but* being the Tyrol and Vienna. The rain rather made us alter our plans. We went to Munich, hoping the weather would clear. We saw all that was to be seen there, and much more than was worth seeing, and then set off to cross the passes into the Tyrol, which is the country of my soul. The people are delightful—so sociable, so tame, they hop on one's fingers; but they are willing to feed one, instead of chirping eternally to be fed, as the Swiss do. They have more real sociability and *agrément* than any nation I have seen, and that throughout all ranks—fact is, what are called the lower classes are quite as cultivated as any; they all read and write, and know the history of their country, and delight in telling stories of it. We travelled in a humble way in Stell-wagens (something between a diligence and an omnibus), which are set up by the innkeepers, and are always going up and down the valleys picking up people. What with Ida and Mr. Mohl, I had as much conversation as if I had spoken German, as they both talked

away for ever, and, as the Tyrolese are the gallantest people under the sun, Ida's bright eyes and rosy cheeks made us friends everywhere. I kept rejoicing I was not a grand lady, obliged to travel in a fine carriage with post-horses to keep up my consequence, and see nothing but my maid stuck opposite to me and my man behind on the coach box, which is the travelling solace of all great ladies.

Ischl is a beautiful, beautiful place in the Salzkammergut, which is a beautiful country east of Tyrol, formed by the continuation of the Alps as they lower down towards Styria. There are seven or eight lakes. It is a little like Scotland, only covered with trees. Salzbourg is the capital, and famous for its beauty; but *that* I could not see, as it rained all day. Ischl is a watering-place in some of these mountains, where all the court of Vienna and the finest people of Austria go; and we found there the Queen of Holland, who wrote to Mr. Mohl to go and see her. I dined with her two days running; she was delighted to have Mr. Mohl and M. de Meyendorff to talk to. Now, this latter is certainly a clever man, and to me very amusing, because he is a great *diplomate.* Nothing could be more curious than to see the *revers de la médaille* through him of everything in the politics of Europe one sees the other side of. He is reckoned in Austria and Russia as the most influential person they have. Nothing could be kinder than the queen, and we should have dined oftener with her had we not left Ischl. We went away in a modest Stell-wagen, and I almost cried at leaving the mountains. We went then to Vienna; stayed a fortnight. I went to the theatre six times. I enjoyed Vienna much also, and all the curious things I learnt there about Hungary and the other end of Europe. It seemed as if new ideas were pouring into me so fast that the neck of the bottle was too narrow and would not let them enter, which means my bad memory, for I can't recollect a quarter of all I learnt and saw. Mr. Mohl dined continually at M. de Meyendorff's. A great *agrément* in Vienna is the ease with which one makes acquaintance. I have seen nowhere in Europe people so courteous and so friendly; they are like what the French are described to have been before the Revolution. Like them they are desperately fond of amusing themselves, and on Sundays and *fêtes* the whole population turns out to all the gardens they can find to feast in. If you sit by any one he is willing to talk, and don't think it odd. It is the only country in Europe where I have seen such sociability

and such polish in each class; even the lowest are gentle and soft in manner—never swear at their horses, never beat them. We went from Vienna to Hainfeld, where Captain Hall stayed and wrote a book called "A Winter in Styria;" and a very curious place it is. M. de Hammer being an Orientalist is a great friend of Mr. Mohl's; he made a great fuss about us. He is a charming old man of seventy-nine, all politeness, very droll, and has written the "History of the Assassins," for which I named him the Old Man of the Mountain. He has written in all 130 volumes, and has just begun a "History of Oriental Poetry" in twelve volumes, in quarto, which he sometimes fears he shall not have time to finish.

We came back all through Styria and Carinthia—through places that had never seen an Englishman, let alone a woman. We enjoyed this more than all; true, we had a charming young man of a Tyrolese * who helped us along. In one place we could get no Stell-wagen, because there was only one, and the man who had it only gave places to the people he liked; this was such a new way of doing business that we were reconciled to the inconvenience by the curiosity. The conductor of one of our *wagens* told us that when we got into Carinthia the people in the inns (*such inns!*) would all go and hide themselves; and actually they did in one of them. We took post-horses at the place where the man would only let his *wagen* to those he took a fancy to, and we got on back to Tyrol with great fun and enjoyment, but not very good victuals; but we none of us cared, and we were much more curious about queer ways than fine cooking. It was pretty cold in most of these high valleys, they being along the north side of the crest of the Alps which separates Southern Austria from Venice and Northern Italy; but as it was September no one thought of a fire. There are no chimneys, all *poêles*, eight feet square each way; take up half a room. The kitchens have an enormous *fourneau* in the middle, about a little higher than a table; on this a wood fire is lighted—*no charcoal*—and the smoke goes up in the roof all about to find a hole which is sometimes on one side. The odd thing is that, though the kitchen is in a manner one large chimney, the smoke never makes one's eyes smart; it all keeps to the top, and makes the whole as black as if it were painted. Quantities of all sorts of things are standing on this large *fourneau*, all round the crackling fagots.

* The charming Tyrolese was M. Schmidt von Zabiérow.

I can't say the kitchens were very clean; however, they are much dirtier in the Pyrenees. We came back all through Tyrol again, as I never could get enough of it, and should like to go again next year. We got to Paris in twelve hours from Strasbourg by the railroad. . . .

Adieu, dear children.

Yours ever,
M. MOHL.

Paris, October 8, 1852.

DEAREST HILLY,

. . . Almost the whole of this journey we got up at four to be off at five. To tell you all the curious people, the beautiful country, the succession of new and delightful impressions, would be impossible in a dozen letters, but you may imagine getting up early, sleeping in *taudis*, huddling on one's clothes, putting on all the petticoats we possessed, with a very short allowance of towels and no time for sousing; in Carinthia scarcely anything to eat. In some of the places where horses were to be changed the folk all went and hid themselves; in others more advanced in civilization, the mothers called the children to the doors to look at us. One conductor turned round every now and then when we were talking English (Ida and I) and grinned amain at the drollery thereof; and had exactly the expression of a body looking benevolently into a cage which contained animals from New Holland. He was a good body, though, and when it was dark he would put out his hand to feel the buttocks of his horses, and if they were damp from going over-quick he would go a foot's pace for a time. He played us the trick at one place of making us get up at half-past two (morning). We huddled down like Hamlet's father, "unshriven," etc. (there was a large beer-glass to wash in), and his conductor-ship was still in bed. After an hour wasted he was ready. We all got in very cross, and after rattling on two or three hours he got something good which opened his heart, and he told us, grinning much, that he had *deeply deeply* impressed on the kellnerinn to wake us an hour before him, that *we* might wait for *him*, and not *he* for *us*. I vowed vengeance and looked sour. I told Mr. Mohl to mind and not give a "pour boire" and to tell him why; but this treatment of his horses, the never using a whip, the never speaking above his breath to them (swearing at them is unknown all through Austria), softened me, and

about an hour or two before we arrived we heard him talking to a man on the box he had picked up (we were in the cabriolet) to this effect—that the occupation of a "kutscher" was a very sorry one; that he had worked hard for years and wanted to marry (he had a bouquet in his hat), and the sum was very far from what it must be before the commune (*gemeinde*) allowed him, and that it increased so slowly he did not know if he should ever get it. This softened me so (and I recollected he had probably been rubbing down the horses an hour after we had got to bed) that I exhorted M. Mohl to give him a large "pour boire." Now, this may be a mystery to you which I will explain. The commune (*gemeinde*) will not allow any person to marry unless he can show forth that he has a certain sum for his children, the priest being strictly forbidden to perform the ceremony. This is, I am told, the law all through Tyrol, Carinthia, and Styria. As these people are very sentimental they sometimes go to Rome to get married. "Well," exclaimed I, "that must cost more than the sum to be saved," thinking, innocent me, that they went in cabriolets behind kutschers like such a grandee as I. "Oh no! it costs them nothing, for they go as pilgrims and beg their way on foot; but when they come back the *gemeinde* hands them over to the tribunal to be punished for such a breach of the law; then they are fined." Of course, therefore, many dispense with the ceremony and the pilgrimage, and instead of marrying do waur; but the quantities of bouquets I saw in people's hats proved to me that a great number conformed, for when a man is engaged, the damsel has flower-pots in her window, and gives him a bouquet, which he sticks in his hat. In Tyrol, when she is coquettish and jilts the swain, all the other young men of the village assemble under her window and throw down the flower-pots. I never saw such gallantry to the fair sex in any country nor in my best days, as in Tyrol, in all classes; they speak in a different voice, and have a manner so different towards a woman, that it must strike the most unobservant. I saw not one exception, living among kutschers and peasants in Stell-wagens, which pick up every one in the road for a very slight sum. I must say the Tyrolese are more occupied with flirting than any nation under the sun, but it struck me as a proof of good morals; for if the men despised the women they would not be so civil to them, and if they lived in a disorderly way they would not care so much for their mere company. However, I abstain from conclusions; I tell what I saw and heard. It would be too long to tell all

I spied out in Vienna, but an anecdote just crossed my mind which I will relate. We were introduced to a Polish lady whose name I can't spell or pronounce, who had been in Galicia during all the terrible massacres; she was one of the *noblesse*, and gave a fearful description, which I skip, of the state of things there. In the course of conversation she said to Mr. Mohl, "Before 1848 no lady ever danced, or talked, or would give her arm in the street to an officer of Engineers. Why? Oh, of course, as they must have talent and education, there was no *noblesse* amongst them; they were nobodies." "Bless my soul!" says Mr. Mohl, "what a state of things! Why, you are like people of the thirteenth century. It's no wonder you were all massacred; it was just the Jacquerie of the Middle Ages." She did not seem to comprehend him much, though she was very clever in her way; but these ideas seemed quite new to her. She then told him that at a grand ball a young lady had refused to dance with an officer in the Engineers, saying she did not dance. A few minutes after he saw her flourish away with a partner, and he said indignantly to a comrade, "Look at those people! they owe their lives to us; we have saved them from worse than death; and now they want us no more this is the way they treat us." The young emperor was behind and overheard. He addressed the officer and asked the name of the young lady. He answered that he had no idea he was overheard, and begged he might not be obliged to tell. The emperor insisted, and he gave her name. He immediately called to the Prince Lichtenstein, who is grand master of the palace, or some such thing, and showing him the young lady he said, "I strictly forbid her ever being invited to any Court Ball again." This young emperor is a great curiosity in his way, but I have no time to say half.

Writing in 1873 to Miss Wyse, a valued friend of later years, whose acquaintance she made on this occasion, she says—

I remember well the Riesenberg, which was not far from Schloss Hainfeld. M. de Hammer took us there, and gave me a history of it, and its seven fortifications and moats. I remember well, too, your beautiful mamma, and that M. Mohl came up to me and said, "Come down quickly to see the handsomest lady I ever saw." It was a time of great enjoyment to me, and everything is delightful that recalls it.

M. Mohl wrote from Vienna to Miss Bonham Carter—

Vienna, September, 1852.

MY DEAR HILLY,

I don't know when my wife has written to you, and cannot ask her, as she is, of course, in the theatre, so you will most likely get a repetition of what you know already. She and Ida were so delighted with Ischl, the fine air and beautiful scenery, and the good company we found there, that they would have stayed a month longer; but I had a secret uneasiness about Vienna, so I brought them here. When we left the mountains near Gmünden, they were so doleful that I proposed to go back; but happily they were ashamed of coming back, like the bad shilling, after all the adieus and leave-takings. If they had accepted the proposal I should have missed the man I wanted most to see—the director of the Imperial Printing Office, who was just going off to the Tyrol for three weeks, and put off his departure for three days to show me his establishment, and explain to me the system of encouragement of Oriental printing they have here. I know now what I wanted to know, and am an idle man who is looking at collections of medals and antiquities, dining out, and undertaking inroads on the public places of amusement of the Viennese. My old friend Meyendorff is here—a most potent signor, who lends my wife his *loge* in the Burg-Theater, to her and Ida's notable satisfaction, and gives me dinners and stories of the Government here. However, I don't think it will last long, and as I want to see old Hammer, the Oriental scholar, who is in his château of Hainfeld in Styria, we meditate going there, and then returning to Paris by Brixen and Bregenz, if the passes are not yet snowed up.

I am very much satisfied with what I see here, particularly the printing office and the collections, which are very beautiful. I find the people very kind and good-natured, very much given to eating and drinking, and for the moment very little to politics and such-like speculations. The nobility goes into the army, despises the civil service, is rather ignorant and uncultivated, but very polite, and with good manners. In the Casino, the most aristocratic club, the reviews, down to the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, are hardly ever cut open. The great aristocracy is enormously rich, but spends its money on horses, fine furniture, etc., cares not even for fine arts, although

they have picture-galleries which they have inherited, and which it is the custom of rendering public. As to science, it is unknown to them almost by name, and very little honoured by the state, or, in fact, by anybody. There is little small nobility; it has perished in the wars of religion. No nobleman ever sends his son to the university; it is reckoned bad taste. I suppose it is a state of things as it was in France a hundred years ago. They are really very backward. The army is the best part of the nation, and absorbs all the force and the money of it. The emperor is young, very active, very wilful, rather harsh, very sober, without vanity, but with all the pride of his house. If he lives long he will become a very important personage in the world, for good or for evil. There seems to be much good here and many capabilities, but it is yet in a low state of civilization, and all asleep, at least as far as I can see. What may be under the surface I don't know, but my impression is that this population has retrograded since the days of Charles V.—certainly in comparison with others, but perhaps even absolutely. However, I am saying here more than I could prove. The country is most beautiful and the climate delicious, although we have suffered a great deal from rain.

The railroads will make travelling very troublesome, because they throw such masses of travellers during the fine weather on the towns and show-places, that no inns can contain them. At Salzburg we nearly slept in an omnibus; at Ischl whole companies arriving were offered a clean-swept corridor for a bedroom and their carpet bags for beds. Vienna is crammed full, and so it is everywhere.

This is a most inconvenient town; between the town proper and the suburb is a *glacis* of a quarter of a mile broad, which makes the distances intolerable. The town itself is small, and quite insufficient for the public offices, the shops, and the houses of the aristocracy which are crowded in it. These aristocrats' "hôtels" are of enormous size, and much more magnificent than any in Paris, but very dark, because the façades are in very narrow streets, and the courtyards insufficient for the height of the palaces; but these people won't live in the suburbs, where they could have light, air, and gardens. The lodgings are dearer than in Paris, at least in the inner town; in general life seems to be dear, only the habits of the people are simple and not exacting, and they seem to enjoy life extremely. I am scandalized at the neglect of literature, and the little, or rather

no influence of literary people here. It is possible that they have too much in Paris, but this is downright barbarism. Books seem to exercise no influence on the ruling class, and with the great material power of this empire, and its geographical and historical position, I am afraid that it will be again, as it has been in the sixteenth century, the great obstacle of the thorough reformation of the world.

September 6.

Saturday we were at Laxenburg, a very beautiful garden of the emperor, ornamented with a modern kickshaw feudal fortress; but the grounds are very fine, and the trees particularly so. Afterwards we had a grand supper with actors and actresses (I hope you see I am making considerable progress in the ways of the world), and one sees strange things in such strange company. There was an actress, a very handsome and modest-looking lady with her husband, who have a good-sized estate in Moravia, in which they pass their summer playing the squire, and in winter she plays in Berlin and here; her name is Koester. The supper was expressly given to our honour and glory!

I wish you were here; my wife is looking at the tombs of the emperors, or some such lugubrious sight. God bless you!

Madame Mohl began the winter merrily, with a very successful dinner-party.

October, 1852.

MY DEAR HILLY,

Ranke has been here these five days; he goes, alas! Saturday. He is delightful (according to my notion, and in his way). I gave a dinner-party Tuesday, which all but crucified Mr. Mohl, because we were twelve people (in all), and much vittles, and a man to wait. He bore it and said nothing, but looked so dismal that I shall not do it half as often as I should like. It's very provoking to be governed by people's countenances. I had M. de Buch, the great geologist (which perhaps you know not, poor benighted creature!), and Ranke—I sitting glorious between him and M. de Collegno—and M. Roulin, M. Ampère, Miss Anna Mohl, Mr. Mohl, Madame de Collegno, M. Elie de Beaumont, Mérimée, Miss S—— the beauty. I wrote the names down on bits of paper; I walked round the table calculating and cogitating (I have

written them down as they sat for your edification). It went off pretty well, thanks to Ampère, but Collegno was dismal, as he had just learnt the death of Gioberti; and then the chimney smoked in the drawing-room. Still, it was rather a successful affair, but not so much so as the dinner at Ghita's * a week previous. These things are like all other *chefs-d'œuvre;* a little touch of chance, a something beyond the reach of art, often makes them go off better than all the calculations and precautions.

I went last night with Ranke to M. Thierry, and there came Mignet, upon which the three historians had a long disquisition which greatly interested me about the state of France in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Ranke has just written a book on and about Henry IV., Sully, Francis I., the conquest of Naples, the politics of Mazarin, etc. Mignet just as beautiful as ever. I had a wonderful longing to invite him to dine with Ranke on Friday, but I thought of Mr. Mohl's dismal face, and refrained. If you can remember to tell this to him when I'm dead, I shall be obliged to you, as he thinks I had my own way in everything. It will do him good to know that I would have had a dinner-party once a week if I had followed my fancy, and he will rejoice at what he escaped.

She adored Henri IV. as much as she detested the Bonapartes, and read everything, however dull and archaic, that was written about him. In the last year of her life, Mignet (aged eighty-four) one afternoon obeyed a summons from his old friend to meet Mrs. Wynne Finch at her house. Mignet was astonished to find that Madame Mohl was studying some old chronicle on the laws enacted by the Great King. He went on to give them a most interesting lecture on the reign and virtues of Henri IV. Madame Mohl got tired, and touching Mignet's shoulder with all the petulance of a spoilt child, she cried, "Assez, mon cher, vous prêchez une convertie."

She was very fond of the historian Ranke, and among Madame Mohl's papers is the following sonnet, copied in her own handwriting:—

* Madame de Collegno.

Madame Ranke's Sonnet.

THINKING OF AN ENGLISH LADY WHO LIVES IN THE RUE DU BAC.

As sportive as a fawn in the greenwood
Is her blithe spirit, blending sense and play,
So lightly bounding, graceful, coy, and gay,
Yet ever pitiful and kindly good.
By few her depths of heart are understood;
For, working charity the livelong day,
She does her best to chase life's gloom away,
Too wise o'er its unfailing cares to brood.

But all must own her bright peculiar power
To waken happiness where she appears,
Or soothe to rest dull sorrow's sighs and fears.
Oh, more to be desired than Beauty's flower
Is such a sunlit, soul-reviving dower,
That smiles in later as in earlier years.

By Clara Ranke. Sent to the most flattered original in 1855.

A sad domestic event put an end to these gaieties: Madame Mohl's niece, Mrs. Martin, died of blood-poisoning. M. Mohl writes to Miss Bonham Carter—

Rue du Bac, December, 1852.

MY DEAR HILLY,

I have got to-day your very kind letter. I suppose my wife will answer you very soon, but as I don't know when I will try to do it first. She was, as you may imagine, very much cast down with these news, which were perfectly unexpected, as we knew nothing of the short malady of poor Selina. My sister-in-law wrote to me to prepare her sister; but what can one do to prepare news the most unlikely one could imagine? It is about ten days ago; my wife has hardly seen anybody since, or gone out. She was uncertain if she should go to England, as she was doubtful if her sister would like it or not. She has written to her, but the answer has not arrived. I think she will decline. She wrote to me with great resignation. It is a beautiful letter, but my wife is afraid of reading it.* You know

* This is very characteristic of Madame Mohl's fear of painful excitement.

enough of the family to feel how great this misfortune is, and I am afraid my sister-in-law, however stoical or devoutly resigned, will not be able to bear this, to her, incomparable loss. I am very sorry for her. I have the greatest esteem for her, and even a great fondness, far as our habits of mind are asunder. It is altogether a most pitiful case, and arising from so improbable a cause. I don't know anything which gives a more vivid impression of the uncertainty of life—to wash a child's diseased ear, having a scratch on one's thumb, and to die from the inoculation of this virus! It is abominable.

I have little to say from here; we are living in the midst of a colossal lie, which is built on enormous tyranny which has become possible by the follies of the republicans. But what can one say on this without repeating the same thing over and over? I hate to hear of it and to talk of it.

I am troubling my head with a number of hobby-horses, but they are an unruly set, and very seldom, when they come out, answer one's expectations. I have just brought to life one I had worked for these ten years—a collection of Oriental classics. The first volume is now at last printing, and I hope it will go on by its own strength. We shall see.

I am now occupied with another, that is to remodel the administration of the Institut, which is a very troublesome affair, but I think will be accomplished next year, at least, tolerably; but it is easier to make than to mend, and so I am meditating something quite new—the creation of an Arabic university at Algiers, where letters, medicine, theology, and jurisprudence shall be taught by the remnant of learned Mahomedans—except medicine, which must be taught by Europeans. It would be a great element of peace between the French and Arabs, and the medical school a great benefit to all Mahomedans. I believe that it will be done at last, when the idea has had time to penetrate some official brain. But I hope it is the last of my hobbies; I am sick of this ungrateful family.

I don't doubt but what you have heard about my poor madman Chapira. I was told he had become mad in England, which I did not wonder at. He was before about as insane as any man who is allowed to walk about, and I conclude from your letter that he is dead; it is the best for himself. If one should find in a novel this strange mixture of pride and humility, of helpless folly and heroic determination and perversity, nobody would believe that such

a creature could have existed. It was an entirely hopeless case: The story of his books, and of his determination of carrying five or six thousand volumes with him in spite of everybody, is such that I can hardly believe my own *souvenirs*. He drove his last landlord, who is an old, very simple man, almost crazy; and his son has told me since that his father never recovered from the terror and the rage in which Chapira's strange proceedings drove him. The son is a judge somewhere in the provinces, and was obliged to come here to try to restore some peace in the house. A Catholic missionary society had offered me to take charge of him, and to send him to a country house they have near Amiens, if I would pay his pension for two years. But after having accepted, Chapira broke off when he saw that the society would not transport his books to Amiens. His pride was intolerable, and inspired him with unlimited ideas of the duties of others to him, while he never conceived that he had any to others. It was the most ill-regulated mind I have ever observed, and nothing could save him.

My wife has just got a letter from her sister, who wants her to go to England—not now, but in spring. She writes that she is bodily well, and her deep religious feeling gives her a certain calmness.

Twenty-seven years after Mrs. Martin's death, Madame Mohl wrote to Lady Eastlake—

My sister, to whom I was greatly attached, lost her only daughter, who was still young, and who left seven children, the youngest only six months old. From that time my sister never left them, and I made a sort of vow that I would never spend a year without spending some months with her; for this lost daughter was more like a younger sister to me—my sister had married so young. This daughter's death was dreadful to my sister, and no one but I knew what the loss was to her.

On her way to Cold Overton she never failed to spend a few weeks (rather less than more) with her friends in London. She was intolerant of our habit of flying from London at the feasts of the Church. She writes, "I don't want to arrive at a time called Whitsuntide, when everybody is absent. Can

you tell me when it finished? I was caught once in London at that bad tide, and don't want to be so again."

We were all eager to have her; as an inmate she gave no trouble; she never put out the household in any way. She would take pains to be agreeable to the stupidest and most insignificant person who happened to look in. She never snubbed or neglected any one in our house, not even very young ladies, although she would sometimes say, if she chanced to sit near one, "My dear, I felt so ashamed of not being a young man." The dullest dinner-party was transformed by her presence. "My dear," she would say, "I think it a shame to eat people's vittles and give them nothing in return." In society she disliked *tête-à-têtes*, and thought them very ill-bred. She liked a little circle in which the ball of conversation is tossed from one to the other, she thought it more exciting and less fatiguing than if the company split up in the English fashion into duets. She never could understand the pleasure which English people find in standing and saying three words to each other at evening parties; she would try to get two or three to sit by her and talk quietly, but she said they seemed in a sort of feverish fidget as if expecting some wonderful sight, and incapable of paying attention. She greatly enjoyed a real *tête-à-tête* with a friend when there was no distracting company present, and would readily unlock the stores of her memory, and pour out the results of her long and varied experience.

Although she was so fond of society and talked so much and so easily, a certain amount of solitude was absolutely necessary to her. She would come home from a round of visits looking fagged, with her hair all out of curl, and throw herself into an armchair, exclaiming, "I am as tired as fifty dogs," and then take up what she called a nourishing book (an epithet of high praise which she also applied to persons), and retire to her room for a couple of hours, whence she would

emerge at dinner-time, fresh, brilliant, with her curls and her mind quite crisp; the life and soul of the company.

Nothing bored her more than a well-intentioned hostess who would never allow her to be alone. She writes—

I went six times to the play in a fortnight, and was fatigued, but much more with the never being alone than with the going out. It is to me inconceivable that *vie de famille* you lead in England, sitting four or five people together all day. I must be several hours alone or I am knocked up, and seeing company at stated hours never fatigues me like that dripping twaddle called *par abus* conversation. You can't read an hour at any time without some insignificant talk interspersed. I always lock myself up many hours in my room at Cold Overton, and when I come out I am full of spirits; but the others are worn out.

She always conformed to the rules in other people's houses, and her punctuality was unfailing. She used to quote from Madame de Sévigné, "Ma fille, on ne reste jamais au milieu d'un quart d'heure."

She wrote to Miss Bonham Carter—

I always fight against the tendency we all have to use up other people under pretence that one is fond of them; but, of course, one may do the same, and if ever I *do*, be so good as not to give way to me; it does me harm, for it makes me more selfish and unreasonable. I don't count among this my inordinate love of exactness to time, because it is a cruel waste of everybody's life to keep one person waiting. . . . We all have but limited means and strength, and if we spend ourselves in sympathizing with nonsense, we can't have it for what people really want. . . . As if it were possible to do anything in any way without giving all one's best juices to it. . . . Families want their daughters to follow their pursuits at odd times and in any odd room, dining-room or other; but if you can't give the best of yourself to it, you will do nothing.

She thus describes a *soirée* at the Royal Academy—

DEAREST HILLY,

"I was sorry not to see you at the valley of Jehoshaphat; but it was more from regret that you should lose so amusing a spectacle than for the sake of meeting, for a "how d'ye do?" and a shake hands is really of no value. I got no more from the most agreeable than from the most disagreeable of my acquaintance, and I admire the parvenu-ship in social manners which gives a fever in the feet to those who pretend to be at ease, and congeals their ideas in their heads; they are absolutely incapable of any good feeling or thought, because they are inebriated with the effect of seeing so many fine folk. They are like country peasants staring and stupefied at their first sight of London, only they pretend to be joking and above it: if they were not, why are they out of themselves—incapable of hearing what is said or answering, and in the agonies of trying to bring forth a smart remark which won't come? If they would sit down and talk to their acquaintance as if they were at home at ease, it would be worth while to go out, but the effect on their brain is something to me unaccountable; people who really are not remarkably stupid seem transformed into wriggling idiots, and the young ladies do nought but giggle—I can't think what there is to laugh at; I should be very glad to laugh—and the old ladies smile and smirk with an air of assumed benevolence, which says, "I'm sure I've no business here. I must be good-natured to make myself pardoned for coming." The men too, forsooth, want to be light and airy, and say exactly the contrary of everything they think, for that is supremely clever. Nevertheless, I was amused pretty well. Lady Eastlake was the only natural person there, for she did her honours like one born to receive graciously and with ease.

But Madame Mohl did not allow the amusements of London or the importunities of her friends to keep her long away from her beloved sister and Cold Overton. Her arrival there was the signal for great rejoicing among the little tribe of grandchildren who surrounded Mrs. Frewen Turner. She talked to them, read, walked, and rode with them. There was scarcely any society, but Clarkey (as they all called her) was completely happy. She had a very large bedroom, which she also made her sitting-room, and carried thither her

books and her drawing. She was very anxious to encourage a taste for drawing in her nieces, and soon their easels were brought into Clarkey's room, which became the atelier of the house.

There were so many little people, Frewens and Martins, that they overflowed the dining-table, and had their dinner at a side-table. At luncheon Madame Mohl used to call out, "Young ladies at the cat's table" (a German expression), "whose turn is it to ride with me?" and those whose privilege it was were greatly elated. They scampered along, through brake, through brier, regardless of obstacles. Once they were galloping in high glee when they saw a turnpike, and they had none of them any money. The gate was open, and they rode full tilt through it, to the consternation of the keeper—an achievement of which they boasted when they got home; but M. Mohl happened to be at Cold Overton, and he and Mrs. Frewen Turner took a very different view of the matter. The next day M. Mohl gave a double toll to the turnpike-keeper, because, as he told him, "My wife is a queer body, and she may very likely do the same again."

Her love of animals was as great as her fondness for children. She wrote to me after I had lost and recovered my dog—

DEAR MINNIE,

I hope you don't think me such an abominable wretch as to expect anything can be so interesting as the dog's return, or that any biped short of an impassioned and graceful lover can be compared to it. I don't joke at all. I love my cat better than most of my friends, and a dog I don't choose to have because I know I should love it better than all my family; not that I should have the slightest remorse for that, but the affliction it might give me if I lost him I will not risk. Dog-stealing is a regular business in London, and you must take care you have not to give several pounds every three months. I know a lady who gave up living in England to secure her dog.

Miss Martin writes—

There was a large setter at Cold Overton, named Sailor, that every one feared to approach till she tamed him by taking his food to his kennel. One Sunday she was walking with two Frewen nieces through a long plantation, with a stream and ponds at intervals, Sailor in attendance. He ran after a sheep from a neighbouring field, which rushed into the pond in blind haste, and fainted from fright. In a moment Clarkey had whipped off her dress-skirt and was standing in water up to her waist, supporting the head of the sheep above the water to save its life. My cousins rushed to a neighbouring cottage for help, one of them holding Sailor, no easy job. I can remember great mystery hanging round this story, and how my aunt and cousins smuggled themselves by back-staircases to their bedrooms that their wet garments might not be seen, lest Sailor should get a beating!

Pity for all suffering was a passion with her. She could not bear to see a horse beaten. It was almost painful to drive with her, for she would keep looking out to see if the coachman was flogging his horses, and insist on my calling out to him every two minutes that we were not in a hurry. In Paris it was worse. She said that nothing in England struck her so much as our superior humanity to animals; it was quite a pleasure to her to look out of the window when a great party was going on, and see the coachmen patting their horses.

At Cold Overton they had a frisky young horse with strong opinions, one of which was an objection to starting. One day Mr. Martin was going out in his dog-cart; the whole family assembled in the paved courtyard to see him off. The horse declined to start; Mr. Martin began to beat him. Madame Mohl cried out. It was represented to her that the only way to get the animal off was to flog him; whereupon she flung herself down on the paving-stones and straightway went into hysterics. Her nieces rushed to her assistance. Presently she looked up and said to her niece Margey, "My

dear, has he stopped beating. If he hasn't, I shall scream again."

On Sundays she went regularly to church in the morning, and listened attentively to the sermon, sitting on the edge of her seat, her mouth pursed up and rocking herself to and fro. In the afternoon she would lie on her bed, putting on her nightgown over her dress so that she might not be disturbed, and writing her innumerable letters.

In spite of her extraordinary vitality she suffered very much from weak health. Over-fatigue, worry, distress, or cold, would bring on an attack of internal catarrh, which was very painful and laid her up for days. She had one of these attacks in England in the autumn of 1853, and writes thus after her return to Paris :—

Paris, October, 1853.

DEAR HILLY,

I am certainly much better, though not well yet. Oh that I had followed your beneficent advice, and taken the second blessed, little lovely black bottle! I should not have got soaked in the rain yesterday, nor wetted shoes and stockings, nor had a grey border of mud to my gown, nor caught a stomach-ache and a tooth-ache, and I should, moreover, have written three letters. *D'abord*, I forgot my caoutchoucs, which was a great help to all these disasters; and for why? 'Cause I lost my heart to a charming creature with a very black beard, a short upper lip, an elegant figure, and such manners! We talked almost all the way from London to Paris (such a lovely face!), and how do you suppose that I could look after such low things as caoutchoucs? So I didn't; and not being able to exist without Pale Ale, went in such weather as I almost never saw in Paris to the Faubourg St. Honoré, to three places, before I got the right sort. This charmer of mine was just opposite; I'm afraid you did not see him. When I got settled I pulled out Greg to cut open; he was curious to see the book, put his head this way and that, and at last could not help asking about it. I immediately handed one volume which he offered to cut open. This soon established conversation. He was along with two Americans, had

no twang whatever, and did not say "my country;" but still I thought him American—why, I don't know.

Ten days ago did I begin this letter, and a sort of listlessness came over me as if I had taken a narcotic. I was going to tell you in my first page all the emotions of my soul about my beautiful American, and what a marvel he was, and how I cogitated how I should entrap him to come and see me, and how I succeeded, and how he told me he had lived three years at Toulouse; and the more I talked the more I liked him, and one of the Englishmen and I agreed we never had seen such a gentleman from the other side, he being as much persuaded as I was that he was an American. To tell you the truth, I had already invited him to dinner, and made a romance. Nothing could exceed his elegant attention; he would lug part of my baggage, leaving his own valuables and cigars to the mercy of the *douaniers* at Paris. Ass that I was, I might have guessed no American could have done that. Just before we parted, and I had given him my address, he said in rather a melancholy tone he wished I had not such a distaste to his countrymen. I said, "I have said nothing against Americans." "I am not American, but Irish." I bore up pretty well, considering. I said, "I never said distaste; *disapproval—yes.*" However, we had not time to enter into delicate disquisitions; the commissioner was running away with some of my luggage, and he with some other. Out we came and found Mr. Mohl. We bade adieu, and home I came. I wondered and hoped I should see him, and he came Thursday. I was very poorly, but he sent word he was leaving Paris. This *was* a death-blow, but I then had him in. After a little conversation he told me he had followed my advice; he had gone to Sichel for his eyes, and he should come back very soon. (I revived.) I said something. He answered, "I shall only take time to embrace my children" (oh, for help! he was married); and something made him say, "My wife" (confound her, etc.). I did not cry "D——!" but said in a sweet tone, "I hope I shall have the pleasure of seeing her." What were those Spartans compared to me, I should like to know? All my plans squashed. However, he's a delightful man, and I hope I shall see him again. One comfort is our fancy was mutual, therefore I hope I shall.

She even derived some enjoyment from this illness.

December 31, 1853.

Many a happy new year to all you at Embley, for I hope you are still there. I am quite cocky; have put on my stays for the first time; am always hungry; enjoy everything as if I was just born grown up like Adam—but eating is a pleasure which is beyond all comparison the greatest, and I understand the apple story. Receiving visits, gossiping, and all the things which pass for bores, are delightful. I could not have supposed it possible that a fit of illness could make life so enjoyable. Many years ago I was intimate with a charming young American; she was about eighteen or nineteen. She had many troubles here. Her father gambled away all they had. A very interesting young Englishman got her partly out of her troubles. They could not marry (no money), and she went back to America with a heart like a deer stricken with a poisoned arrow. She fell into a consumption, was ill, and dying for months. A year later, I believe, after being given up over and over, she actually came to life again. She wrote to me that as she was getting better life seemed delicious to her; every trifle was a pleasure. She had wished to die over and over before; is not that curious? I fear I have burnt her letters long ago; I am sorry for it. I wish I could find her out. She must be between forty and fifty now. She was of the E—— species. Oh dear! what shall I do if I never see E—— again? I shall go into my parlour to-morrow night and have the family to tea, and make toast myself, and that's a great pleasure. Tell the N——s to get "Villemain's Souvenirs Contemporains d'Histoire et de Littérature;" it is all the fashion. It is amusing; but what adds greatly to our pleasure is its slapping old Boney at every page, and no one being able to cry out "oh!" He has plucked the fowl without making her scream.

She was very angry when people did not take care of their health.

Pray tell me (she wrote to Miss Bonham Carter) how your sprain is. I am afraid you have neglected it, and that has made it so difficult to cure. Oh, the wickedness of neglecting one's self! Suicide is nothing to it; one is buried and done with, people are very sorry, and get consoled; but sick folk are the plague of one's life. They absorb more capital than a war. Their relations are generally anni-

hilated; and then the money! the doctors! the rubbers! the water-packers, the travels, the lodgings at watering-places, the bottles, the gallipots, the plaisters, the blisters, the powders, the pill-boxes, the night-lamps, the saucepans, the messes, gruels, semolinas, tapiocas! I could commit suicide myself to get out of their way; wicked, cruel, extravagant, selfish, absorbing wretches. Adieu, dear Coz; take care of yourself; don't take care of other folk. Care killed a cat; I dare say it was 'cause the cat took care of her kittens instead of herself.

Yours ever,

MARY MOHL.

The state of politics continued to exasperate M. Mohl. He writes to Miss Bonham Carter—

October 23, 1853.

Nothing new here. The old story of luxury, despotism, and hypocrisy—the last becoming stronger. A few days ago Rouland gave Oppert—a very pushing, conceited, insufferable little Orientalist—the Legion of Honour. Somebody told him O. was a Jew. "Is he?" says the minister, "so much the better. Je suis obligé d'opprimer les Protestants je me rattrape sur les Juifs." It puts one in mind of Pontius Pilate. But I must close this scrap, having much to do and little time. I wish you were here, and we could talk peaceably round the chimney, madame dreaming on the *canapé*, and the kettle singing.

CHAPTER VI.

1854-1857.

Character of Louis Napoleon—Analysis of vanity—Truth—British Gallery—Mismanagement of Crimean War—Visit to Austria and Hungary—Mrs. Jameson—Madame de Goethe—Mrs. Gaskell—Madame de Circourt and her *salon*—Mrs. Hollond and her *salon*—Garden and dinner parties in London—Madame Ristori—Scene in the Rue du Bac—Madame Castiglione—Acquaintance with the Wilsons—Letter to Mrs. Bagehot on her marriage.

EARLY in 1854 my father took an apartment in Paris for four months, and many were the breakfasts and dinners and evenings we enjoyed in the Rue du Bac.

Preparations were going on actively for the Crimean War, and Madame Mohl was indignant at the alliance between England and Louis Napoleon. Her hatred of him increased daily; she would not admit that he was worthy of being a Frenchman, and I find in my father's journal for this year the following note, written in pencil, by her:—

CHARACTER OF LOUIS NAPOLEON.

He is as unlike the ideal Frenchman as possible; he has a particular tact for finding out the rotten spot of the human heart, and in that he casts his anchor. Thus he took C——, by his vanity and plebeian delight at being a personage. War was a horror to him, and L. N. made him believe it was his own opinion—as a great secret.

The ideal Frenchman is, before all, social; this man is lonely. The Frenchman is expansive; this man is close and traitorous. The Frenchman is gay; this man is grave, laughs but little. The Frenchman is brilliantly valorous; this man gets frightened. He ran

away at Boulogne; and even his partisans cannot quote a single anecdote "où il ait payé de sa personne" with the temerity natural to the French. The French are open and frank; though not very truthful, you may get the truth out of them very easily. The only point of resemblance is vanity. But his is a close vanity, like private drinking; theirs is an open expansive vanity, like conviviality."

She thus analyzes vanity:—

Half our vanity is sociability, which is the natural state of vanity. It is the most social passion of our nature, for all the others separate us; *that* unites us to our fellows, we *must* please them to get our way. Love is only for one; avarice is against all; ambition is social only so far as to make footstools of our neighbours; pride, our pet passion in England, is anti-social. "I won't bend to obtain anything from you," is the perpetual thought of a proud man.

No amount of casuistry could cure Madame Mohl's inveterate truthfulness. As Lady Verney says of her, "she was, above all, true;" yet, in her fondness for metaphysical analysis, she writes—

Is suicide a sin? People are agreed that it is; let us accept it. If a murderer comes upon you in a wood and kills you because you refuse to do whatever he requires, you have killed yourself, when a word of your mouth would save you, just as much as if you had swallowed arsenic. If he cocks his pistol and says, if you ain't a Catholic, "I'll kill you," ought not you to lie? Is not lying less than suicide? (I'll ask my sister, who has an inveterate prejudice against both.) And, supposing them equal, by lying you save him from a crime, and give yourself an opportunity of repenting. Thus lying becomes a duty; the balance is in its favour. If a man asks you a dangerous question, silence is sometimes equal to answering; the answer involves danger to others. Lying again becomes a duty; it is often a duty. I'm not fond of the duty—it's troublesome to me; but I have no notion of ridiculous babyish scruples. If people ask indiscreet things, they must be treated like indiscreet children. I hope I am not selfish or unjust, but everybody *must* have arms to defend themselves, or they'll have no wool left on their backs. Mrs. —— can't say *no* to her rascally relations, and in spite of £5000 a year

is in debt; and poor —— is called a cruel husband and bad man because he puts a stop to it, or he might go to prison for her debts. It is an absurd thing, and I may say a contemptible thing, to do for people's importunities and indiscretions anything one would not volunteer. It is giving to the impudent beggar what one would not give to the modest sick workman who don't ask. I'm naturally but too much disposed to tell truths, and very useless and mischievous ones, too; and it's a proper exercise of self-control to keep them quiet.

During Madame Mohl's short visit to London this spring, she went to the Exhibition of Old Masters, at that time held in the British Gallery.

Tuesday, three in the morning.

DEAR HILLY,

I was at the British Gallery yesterday. There are some Vandykes and Reynolds of great value, especially one or two. There is a Gainsborough most beautiful; a round dozen of abominable wry-mouthed virgins which, before this *pre*-art system, would have been curious and interesting, showing the efforts made and the stages attained before one arrives at a result, and the merits of the first workers; but to stick up as models these bunglings is like putting up the instruments of the savages as better worth imitating than the best efforts of our manufactories. People's minds must be diseased to have such notions. There are portraits of a Countess of Derby, and especially a child by Vandyke, an ugly little brat all in the light; it is the most wonderful piece of colour—the transparency, the modelling of the cheeks and eyes. If any one would copy that face three or four times quickly and carefully, I am convinced he would have made a jump of fifty cubits for the next portrait he did. He might not do a good copy of it—it's impossible; but that's not the object, or ought not to be; but his eyes would be sharpened and his colour refined. If you could do a study of that sort and then something from nature, it might get you out of the vile keepsake habit of prettyfying. The child is absolutely ugly; but if people paint portraits they must do Nature as she is, or all character is lost, all life. Life is the real charm of art. Every wig-block in a barber's shop may have great staring eyes and pouting mouth. Don't fail to look at that

Vandyke. Gainsborough is much less true, but there's a wonderful fancy in the dash with which the face is done. It is an Italian sonnet, very artificial, but the art is full of grace and originality. It would be a bad study, and should never be imitated. There's a Burke by Reynolds; there are some very witty thoughts of my dear old Mr. Smirke written in painting, but he has not dug out the faculty of catching nature. I am disappointed in Leslie; he is not a painter, no more than Scheffer.

Politics had not materially altered in the spring of 1855. Mr. Senior says—

Sunday, March 4, I called on the Mohls. We talked of Louis Napoleon's present position.

Mohl. It has not altered materially since you left us in May. So far as it has changed it is for the worse. The war is admitted to have been grievously mismanaged. The expenditure becomes every day more and more profuse. It is supposed in the last year to have amounted to ninety millions sterling, and he has forced the principal cities into equal extravagance. The revenues of Paris are mortgaged for years. The prefect who had long and well administered them was turned out to take in Haussmann, a tool of the court, who calls himself, indeed, the emperor's *sous-préfet.* But even he remonstrates, and some still more flexible instrument is to be substituted. Louis Napoleon cannot submit even to the slight restraints which the existing laws impose upon him. He is constantly attempting little *coups d'état* about trifles, often unsuccessfully. The forms or the delays of office are interposed, and the thing gets forgotten.

In the summer of 1855 M. and Madame Mohl, with their niece, again visited Austria, and went over much the same ground as in 1852.

M. Mohl writes to Miss Bonham Carter—

Vienna, September 4, 1855.

MY DEAR HILLY,

I owe you a letter, and I ought to have paid my welcome debt long ago, but was hurried and flurried beyond endurance in the last weeks of my Paris life. It was as if my friends and my enemies

had conspired to drive me crazy; but you see I am now in this very quiet town of Vienna, and seize the opportunity of an unoccupied evening to talk to you. My wife and Mioche are gone to the Burg-Theater with Mrs. Jameson, and as I had no desire for being blinded by the lights, stupefied by the howlings of the actors, and drummed into morals and æsthetics, I have remained in this inn of mine, called the Stadt Frankfurt, which is a more showy but less comfortable place than the old Golden Lamb. We have found nobody of our acquaintances; the Kenyons are in England, to my great dolor. Madame V—— is at Granada, to my great discomfort. Madame Ottilie Goethe, the old man's too-celebrated daughter-in-law, is in bed, to my small discomfort.

I have nothing to interest me here, except the printing office and the Museum of Antiquities—particularly the first, as Auer is a very active man and given to experiments, while we in Paris are a sluggish set and sleep on our laurels; and so there is much to learn for me, the difficulty of learning the real truth is as great here as anywhere in the world, although they are anxious to tell it and have no secret for me. I wish I had Auer in Paris; we should do wonders. We have there all the materials, the scholars, the artists, and the money required; but all this runs more or less to waste in incapable hands, and—but why do I fall back on my Paris *ennuis*, which to escape from I am spending my precious time and good florins on the highways of Germany? So far I have done well, and very seldom think of anything French. I see no paper, as I am incapable of reading the Austrian ones; and as to French, none fall into my hands, but from time to time a stray number of the *Débats* or *Indépendance Belge*, so old that I am morally sure that not a word in it is true to-day, and so it troubles me little. I read no books, have not written above three letters; am most profoundly ignorant of what people say and think, and am living a sort of animal life, which agrees very well, and which is only interrupted by two incongruous speculations which persecute me, and I can neither solve the mystery nor leave it to its fate—the one is how this great country can do without gold and silver, things never seen by any accident except in the shape of a twopenny piece; and secondly, by what means they make such miserable snuff in the imperial tobacco manufactories. I am haunted by these queries, and must find them out if I am to profit by my travelling, else I might as well have remained in

Paris puzzling over some other question. I am getting some lights on the currency question—it is a curious but disastrous affair; but the other is a dark and incomprehensible matter which I despair of.

My wife will abridge our journeyings a little, because she wants to see her sister before she leaves, or is frozen out of, Cold Overton.

My dear Hilly,

Yours very sincerely,

J. M.

Madame Mohl to Miss Bonham Carter.

Vienna, September 7, 1855.

We have been here four days and found Mrs. Jameson, who is always the same. She is with Madame de Goethe, but don't sleep there. They are very great friends; she introduced us to her. She is very agreeable and very plain; old, perfectly natural, and flowing; speaks English fairly—not so well as I expected, considering all I had heard. I can tell you some little tit-bits of drolleries, but they can't be written; they require too much explanation.

We were eight days at Ischl; I was sorry to leave it. Oh, such a beautiful place! I should like to go every year.

It seems as if the cold in the country proved too much for Madame Mohl.

Cold Overton, Leicestershire, September, 1855.

If it were not for my dear sister, how I would whip home to my own better climate! Whatever people may say about Paris being colder, it's no such thing, and the atmosphere is so different—oh, Lack! Paris is bad enough, but then the "Italiens" opens the 2nd October. Beast that I am to care for such things compared to the country fireside! Well, now I'll confess to a dirty feeling. I said to myself at L—— (where I delight in the people and the place), "How upon earth can anybody that is not crazy live in the country all the winter when they could live in a town?—no society, but with oceans of trouble; nothing but dreary snow to look at. I'd as lieve be in Sweden—(don't tell anybody)—I'd as lieve die." It's a sign I'm growing old.

Adieu, my dear. From always living in it, Good Lord preserve you! I would not marry an angel on such a condition.

Yours ever,

MARY MOHL.

P.S.—I receive this instant a letter from my dear Ghita, all conciliation, to patch me up with her sister, with whom I was very angry for not troubling herself about my illness, because, forsooth, Gian-Martino was going to school—as if people were to give up all friendship because they have a Son; but I shall be affronted for a good while—in fact, I can't help it. I don't like impassioned people, who are so wrapt up in one creature they care for no one else; they must at least accept the consequences, which are, that in time no one else will care much for them. But they ought to be warned as to that; as Madame Récamier said, "Il n'y a que la raison qui ne fatigue pas à la longue."

It was about this time that Madame Mohl made the acquaintance of Mrs. Gaskell, for whom she had the greatest love, respect, and admiration, and whose premature death she never ceased to lament. Mrs. Gaskell stayed frequently in the Rue du Bac, and Madame Mohl told me that she wrote the greater part of "Wives and Daughters" in the larger *salon*, standing up before the mantelpiece,* which she used as a desk, while her hostess went on with her reading and drawing in the adjoining room. Madame Mohl arranged for the translation of Mrs. Gaskell's novels.

November, 1855.

DEAR MRS. GASKELL,

I saw Madame Belloc two days ago. She has finished "Cranford," and is correcting the proofs; she has taken great pains with it. I wonder whether you will be able to judge which of your works will suit the French? I should think not. They are a queer people, and as unlike the English as if they lived at the Antipodes.

Did I tell you the cat died last July? It was a real affliction to us, and I can't find another to suit me. The rats are emancipating themselves, and Julie wants to poison them, poor things; but that's contrary to my principles, and they may eat her apron-strings a long

* The mantelpiece was much too high for Madame Mohl ever to have sat upon it, as has been erroneously stated. Her nieces declare that she never did such a thing in her life. In her own house and in the houses of her friends she always chose a little low chair by the fire.

time before I come to such wickedness. I saw M. Thierry last night. I have found out that when I speak ill of any one (which I often do, you know), he makes haste to tell them. Now *that*, after an intimacy of thirty years, is very dirty, especially as I go and amuse him whenever I can. But I'll try an experiment on him; I'll tell him some great praise of some of my enemies, and see if he repeats it. If he does it will be less dirty, though not right. It will show it's merely the weakness of not being able to keep anything, instead of mischief-making.

Poor Madame de Circourt has burnt her neck so dreadfully by her cap catching fire, that though it is three months ago, she can scarcely see anybody, and has suffered cruelly. Madame Belloc says she bears it with great fortitude.

The *salon* of the Comtesse de Circourt (to whom this letter refers, and whose name occurs continually in her later letters) was one of the most agreeable in Paris. The hostess was a Muscovite, and a brilliant talker. Her husband (who was French) was a perfect encyclopædia of learning, and a most kind-hearted, excellent man. He was a liberal Orleanist in politics. Tocqueville said of him—*

Circourt is my dictionary. When I wish to know what has been done or what has been said on any occasion, I go to Circourt. He draws out one of the drawers in his capacious head and finds there all I want arranged and ticketed. One of the merits of his talk, as it is of his character, is its conscientiousness. He has the truthfulness of a thorough gentleman, and his affections are as strong as his hatreds. I do not think he would sacrifice a friend, even to a good story; and where is there another man of whom that can be said?

Madame de Circourt received much oftener than Madame Mohl; in fact, six times a week at different hours.† Her Tuesday evening receptions were crowded—the rooms full of celebrities, and half the men wore stars. Until her accident,

* Mr. Senior's journals contain pages of his interesting and instructive conversation.

† Monday, from four to six; Tuesday, nine to twelve; Wednesday, four to six; Thursday, two to six; Friday, four to six; Saturday, four to six.

when the muscles of her neck were so burnt that she was forced to keep her head always in one position, she sat constantly at her tea-table, and the guests had to make their way up to her through a narrow path. No one was announced, so there was no stiffness, and it was extremely amusing. After she recovered a little from her accident she resumed her receptions almost every evening, and the tea was made by Madame Mohl, who enjoyed society there more even than in her own house. After Madame de Circourt's death, in 1863, she wrote to me—

I have no place to run into. Madame de Circourt's was the greatest loss to me since Madame Récamier's death. I don't care for regular invitations; I delight in a house where there are various people at certain times, who come in by chance; these diminish every year. Perhaps it is I who don't know how to get new ones; but it takes a long time to fit one's self into a new set. I had some thought of trying to set up a *salon* every night, and in time it would be furnished; but it's a great restraint to stay at home always, yet I am quite sure it is the only way. I have not patience, however, to bear with the tiresome people that I see come to all the ladies that have one. Many years ago I had people every evening, but they were few in number, and I remained at home because my mother's health would not let her go out. It was then I first knew all the people who have since grown celebrated. They were young and unknown—Thiers, Cousin, the Thierrys, Ampère, Mérimée, and many more who are dead. They are now grown old, and lazy, and rich, and fashionable; and in those days, when tiresome people came, I did not mind as I do now. I now always prefer seeing people anywhere but at my own house; I am so much freer, and can go away when I am tired of them. I also like to see people I don't care about or don't agree with; but I don't want to see too much of them. All these whims of mine makes Madame de Circourt's house a great loss, and there is also some mysterious reason why one likes society so much better in one house than in another. I can't tell why, but hers was particularly agreeable to me.

I like Mrs. Hollond's, but never feel the same comfort in her *salon;* it is always politics, and I like variety.

As both Mr. and Mrs. Hollond were entirely English, and had at this time four other domiciles, besides the one in the Rue d'Astorg, so that they were only for a short period of the year in Paris, it is no wonder that they had not such a large and varied circle as the Circourts. Taking these things into consideration, the position held by Mrs. Hollond in French society was an extraordinary one, and it was due chiefly to her personal distinction. She died after a very short illness, in 1884. M. de Pressensé wrote of her in the *Journal des Débats*—

Mrs. Robert Hollond will be as much regretted in Paris as in England. For many years before 1870 all the *élite* of the liberal party met in her *salon*. Odillon Barrot filled the first place in this hospitable house, where he was the oldest friend. Every one admired his kindly, vigorous old age. Precisely because she was a foreigner, meetings which would have been difficult elsewhere, in the ordinary course of social life, became possible in Mrs. Hollond's drawing-room. The love for liberty and hatred of the empire were common ground to all parties, and in all Europe no more distinguished circle could have been found than hers, which included (to speak only of the dead) Montalembert, Rémusat, Mignet, Martin, Laboulaye, Lanfrey, D'Haussonville, Prévost-Paradol.

Scheffer was another great friend of hers; her face recurs again and again in his works, and those who remember his picture of St. Augustine and Santa Monica may form an excellent idea of her refined intellectual beauty. Her benevolence was as remarkable as her intelligence; she set on foot many charitable schemes which her large fortune enabled her to carry into effect, and in several of them Madame Mohl sympathized and assisted. She was, indeed, very much attached to Mrs. Hollond and appreciated by her. I am sorry that the letters which passed between them have not been preserved.

In her annual visit to London, in 1856, Madame Mohl went with us to a garden-party, which she thus describes :—

DEAR HILLY,

Yesterday, Sunday, I breakfasted out, and went to a garden tea-party at Kensington—a very pretty invention. The people are made to amuse themselves here, and pretend it *ennuies* them, and that they are tired to death, and so forth; as if they could not stay at home, as if anybody would cry after them, or even think one bit of them! A young lady (Welsh) sang with such a voice—oh, such a voice! She is extremely pretty, very coquettish, and I fancied myself at the Gymnase, she was so like the actress there.

The Castiglione is at Holland House, where she has taken possession of eight rooms, and is very troublesome. She has been at court and at Lansdowne House. Every one surrounded her, and she said, "Quel pays! on ne m'a pas seulement regardée." She was walking with, I forget who, who showed her some one as a beauty, and she said, "Savez-vous qui vous avez sous le bras pour vous permettre de trouver d'autres belles?" In short, her "impudence protects her sairly." The "croulin ferlie" carries all before her. In this town impudence seems to be the grand secret of success, much more than in Paris. I dined at Mr. Senior's, where I negotiated for Ristori to dine, who pleased everybody. She has ten times better manners, more modest, more dignified, more of the *grande dame* than anybody.

The dinner-party she alludes to included Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone, Lord Lansdowne, Madame Lind Goldschmidt, and Thackeray, who laughingly said he had never seen so strong a cast. Madame Mohl, as her niece writes, "had always quite a passion for Madame Ristori," to whose rehearsals and performances we constantly accompanied her, both in London and Paris, besides meeting Ristori and her husband continually in the Rue du Bac. One evening we had been dining there with Cousin, Villemain, and Mignet, and a curious scene took place after dinner, which I cannot help thinking must have been the foundation of a story which has been circulated, and which all her friends and relations indig-

nantly deny, of Madame Mohl's rudely exclaiming to Madame Ristori, "Tous les Italiens sont de la canaille.'" We all feel it to have been impossible, for Madame Mohl's friendly relations with Madame Ristori were never interrupted. What took place was this. After dinner Cousin was seated in the large drawing-room, with Madame Ristori on his left hand. Villemain came next. I was sitting between him and Mignet, and a most interesting conversation was going on about acting, when another very distinguished man came in without being announced, whose name I will not mention, who took up his position standing with his back to the fire-place and listened to the conversation. The room was dark. He did not recognize Madame Ristori, and he suddenly broke in with, "C'est cette actrice, cette Italienne qui dégrade l'art." A solemn pause ensued, broken at last by Ristori's contralto tones, "Ce n'est pas moi, monsieur, qui dégrade l'art;" and she proceeded to give him an indignant rejoinder, after which she rose up and walked away with her stately step into the small room, where Madame Mohl was making tea and talking to my father and others, in happy ignorance of what was going on. Ristori bade a majestic "good night" to her hostess and marched out, leaving the rest of the party in consternation. Madame Mohl often referred to this scene with mingled amusement and regret. Madame Ristori did not quarrel with her. On another occasion, when Madame de Montalembert spoke against ultra-liberal opinions, the great actress was much more seriously annoyed.

Madame de Castiglione was at this time the reigning beauty in Paris. Mr. Senior thus describes her:—

She is a Louis XV. beauty, tall, round, well formed, with large dark eyes, long eyelashes, straight eyebrows, a clear white complexion, and a mouth which, as I saw it, always smiling, was charming. She sat in the evening, filling with her crinoline a whole sofa, to receive, and certainly to enjoy, the homage of all around her.

Madame Mohl was highly pleased when, some time after her visit to London, she had a private view of this beauty. She wrote to me from Paris—

I saw Artemisia on Tuesday; she has had the gout, and it makes her more consequential than ever. She talked of nothing but all the honours she receives; so I stayed a quarter of an hour, for *I* had *my* honours, which she did not attend to. I had just seen the Castiglione, and was full of her. It was by a lucky accident. I called on Madame Gabriel Delessert (who is delightful) when her Beautyship was announced, and Madame D. said, "Stay to see her." She was dressed like an old Venetian picture, and I think came to pose. She had been ill, and looked so, but is *so* beautiful! She was turned round for me to look at, and I was asked before her face if I had ever seen such a complete *ensemble* of face and figure. Her talk was affected. To my astonishment a *bébé* was mentioned as her article. She lives at Passy, and so does the Delessert. I *would* say at Artemisia's what I had seen, and a lady who was there said that her brother had dined in company with the Beauty two days before, and after dinner she took off her shoe and stocking and put her foot on a black velvet cushion, and every one examined it *à la loupe*—that was her expression—all for the love of art. It brings to my mind Phryne of Greece. When the Areopagus was judging her for corrupting young men, she took off her garments, at which they judged her innocent. So we are beginning *par en bas*.

M. Mohl wrote during his wife's absence in England to Miss Bonham Carter—

I hardly know what to tell you of here. It is the same story of despotism, corruption, and profligacy; if it lasts, this nation will perish morally; if it revolts against it, and the struggle lasts a good while, it may be regenerated by it. My old enemy Fortoul is dead; we do not know by whom he is to be replaced. I hear to-day that his ministry is to be dismembered and distributed to three ministers, the Institute to be given over to Fould as Ministre d'État! But I should like to talk of something else, and don't know of what. It seems the mess they are in in Spain has been cooked by that old devil the Queen Christina, to be revenged on the report made by the

Cortes on her thefts; but it seems the fellow here will not interfere, except the events would turn to the raising of the Duchesse of Montpensier to the throne. But you see I am again slipping into this disgusting neighbourhood. I have seen Jeanron a few days ago. He seems well enough. He was very much rejoiced that we had given a prize of ten thousand francs to his friend Hauréau, a republican who had been conservator at the library, and resigned in 1852. Most likely he will keep this prize for a number of years, to enable him to prosecute a great work begun by the Bénédictins, and interrupted in the revolution; it is called "Gallia Christiana," and is a history of all the ecclesiastic establishments in France—bishoprics, abbeys, etc. The curious part of the affair is that the fanatic Catholics resisted this violently; but they were beaten, and may this happen to them *in secula seculorum!* They are so rampant that it is quite a curiosity to observe their gambols. They think they have got the world in their pocket, but I doubt it. Ampère is come back from Rome old and ragged-looking, but in good health and spirits; he wears a shocking bad hat, and looks altogether very disreputable; but I have long ceased to give him advice in such things, he takes it so very ill. Lady Elgin is at St. Germains; she has kept all her sincerity, but her mind is more and more rusted, and the hinges move with greater difficulty. Her good angel Augusta is gone back to England. I must go this evening there to play two games at dominoes with her, for which purpose I must leave my house at half-past five, and be back at eleven o'clock, which is a monstrous deal of sack to very little bread; but it cannot be helped. The town is as empty as it well can be; but as they go on knocking it down it is yet too populous, and they are putting up movable wooden houses to lodge the population. This fellow is perfectly crazy. There you have my whole budget of news, except I should launch in the affairs of the Academy; but this is an abyss very much to be avoided, and I will rather close the letter than to begin of them.

I am, my dear Hilly,
Yours very sincerely,
J. MOHL.

Paris, July 20, 1856.

Great triumph—I have found your address.

I have suppressed most of the description of the country in the following letter :—

Le Puys, September 8, 1856.

MY DEAR HILLY,

I cannot help bestowing a little of my tediousness upon you. We have been now erring a fortnight in all manner of strange places, and it seems as if we had been absent a century or so. Our satisfaction would have been complete if you had been with us, sharing our good and evil fortune. We went to Clermont, then to Mont d'Or; from there to Arvant, where we had singular and most lamentable adventures; then up the Alagnon to Murat; from there to Les Chaves, where we inspected knowingly that celebrated *cratère de soulèvement*, called Le Puy de Grion—an infernal mountain which we crawled up. It ends in a basaltic cone very steep. My wife had given up a hundred feet below. I went up to the ridge between this and another crater and was disgusted. But Ida, with the guide, climbed up on the highest point, to my great horror and repentance to have permitted it, when I saw them wind about, and heard the stones rolling down from under their feet. She was nearly blown over, but reappeared at last, to my great joy, fatigued and rather frightened at her exploit. We were living at the foot of this odious mountain in an isolated inn, the property of M. le Maire of the neighbouring village, and kept by Madame the Mairesse, a most excellent woman of the most primitive style. The rooms, beds, etc., were incredibly bad; but her cooking was so transcendently execrable, that we should have been starved out of the country if it had not been for her wine and cheese, although she did all she could to please, and sacrificed impermeable hens, whom no boiling or roasting could render eatable or chewable; but we all conceived the greatest friendship for her, and had it not been for her impossible dinners we could never have got away from the place. We find the people all about in Auvergne very dirty, very polite, very hard workers, very eager for money, and some of them cunning and overreaching, others of the greatest simplicity and moderation. A hostess on the crest of one of the mountains where our horse was fed gave us a capital supper, and would never name a price. She said she did not know what people paid for a meal like this, and would be obliged if we paid her according to what we were accustomed to do. Whenever

Ida is drawing it attracts all the population; and they are very polite—bring chairs, stand behind and discuss the *point de vue*, and keep away the boys. She is always surrounded by a large auditory, gaping and admiring. It is the same in towns and villages; and she remains half a day all alone in wild spots drawing, without the slightest inconvenience.

It is astonishing how poorly the people live here. In the villages they seem to eat nothing but heaps of cabbages, lard, and black bread; even rich people, like our hostess in Les Chaves. She possesses a mountain for her cattle, a forest of which the husband makes planks with which he trades, and two large farms which they have hired out. I dare say they are worth twenty thousand francs, and they live exactly like their servants in everything, and have not the slightest idea of any comfort whatever. All the peasants make elder sons to keep the estate together. The estate is valued, a fourth taken off, then the elder son and each other child gets one part, which the elder son pays to the others out of the estate; the younger brothers emigrate, or remain as his servants. Where there are many children, it is only by his great frugality that the elder brother can pay off this heavy debt.

The roads in all this volcanic country are the finest I have ever seen; they are perfect—smooth, no dirt nor dust, as the basaltic never grinds into powder, but in a sort of sand which never becomes mud. As soon as you get out of the basalt the roads show it instantly. But I see it is time to conclude this twaddle, else I should fall into some disputation about political economy, and the queer state of public opinion here as far as I can find it out, and such-like things, which would little interest you. I hope Madame Painting has got a good lift by your abstinence from travel, and that she will bring you to Paris soon and for long.

God bless you, my dear Hilly,

Yours very sincerely,

J. MOHL.

Although Madame Mohl pretended not to like young ladies, she was very kind to them, and of those whom she considered as exceptions she was exceedingly fond. These exceptions were very numerous. Among her prime favourites

were the daughters of the late James Wilson, Minister of Finance in India. The eldest, Mrs. Bagehot, writes—

We spent the winter of 1854–55 in Paris, and Mr. Greg, who had known Madame Mohl for some time, gave us a letter of introduction to her. I remember that, after seeing her two or three times, Julia and I called on her one day and found her alone. She advanced towards us beaming, and said, "My dears, I have just been writing to Parthy,* and told her that at last I have found two young ladies whom I like as I do her and Flo." M. and Madame Mohl showed us about Paris, the studios, etc., and sometimes kept us to dinner *en famille.* Ida stayed with us in London the next season, and the following winter I stayed in the Rue du Bac. When I had known my husband† a short time, I found that he had been an *habitué* of Madame Mohl's *salon* a few winters before we knew her, having been introduced by Mrs. Reid and Miss Sturch.

Madame Mohl wrote the following interesting letter to Mrs. Bagehot on her marriage :—

November 29, 1857.

MY DEAR ELIZA,

You can't think how much I feel your kindness, and how agreeable it is to me to find your friendly sentiments towards me; for, as you say yourself, you are not given to show them, and I have lived so long and seen such a variety of people, that I am not given to imagine such friendship. I am not only rejoiced at the kindness, but also at the communication. Marriages of affection and suitability are so rare that, even if I take no interest in the parties, I am delighted with them, and how much more when I have so warm a feeling to one party, and which, I doubt not, time will give me for both! Mr. Mohl, who is not given to over-esteem, said, "Well! it shows Mr. Bagehot to be a man of sense." As this was not meant for your ear, I think its plainness is of some value. I think as he does, and that you will make an excellent wife. From the article on Lord Brougham, it is evident that Mr. Bagehot is very clever, and that is a great element of happiness *en ménage*—at least, *I* think so. When one finds one's mental amusement at home, every day is a day of festivity, and if one is poor one don't mind it, for what could one

* Lady Verney. † The late Walter Bagehot.

„get better for any money? if one is rich, *ça ne gâte rien*, but it is not necessary to be rich, as I know. In short, the whole is completely satisfactory to my mind, and I rejoice greatly at it, and hope to see you in your new position when I go to England. I only wish it took place in 1857 instead of 1858, as I hate useless delays.

Believe me, dear Eliza,

Yours ever,

MARY MOHL.

CHAPTER VII.

1858-1861.

The *attentat*—Free speaking in *salons*—Madame Mohl visits her grandfather's tomb—Music-meeting at Hereford—Julius Mohl's delight in London—Violent fancies—Carlyle—Wordsworth—Browning—Madame Roland and the French Revolution—Marriage of Ida Mohl—Cats—Julius Mohl president of the Academy—Peace of Villafranca—Commercial treaty—Madame Mohl's article—Mrs. Gaskell—Madame Mohl at Oxford—Visit to Hungary—The Ober Ammergau.

THE celebrated *attentat* (Orsini's attempt to assassinate the emperor) took place in January, 1858. The emperor showed courage at the time, but his nerves were considerably shaken, and a series of arbitrary decrees was the result.

These were freely spoken of in Madame Mohl's *salon*. Mr. Senior wrote—

Monday, March 8, 1858.

I spent the evening at Madame Mohl's. I spoke of the unpopularity, or worse than unpopularity, into which Louis Napoleon seemed to have fallen, as far as I could judge from the conversation of the few people whom I had seen.

Mohl. It is much greater in the class of society which you do *not* see. The *ouvriers* have been principally struck at. They were already angry at the high price of apartments and of food. Like all uneducated persons, they exaggerate the power of a government, and think that the emperor could give them cheap lodgings, and bread and wine, if he liked. Instead of doing so, he inflicts imprisonment and banishment on persons who, perhaps, were *émeutiers* in 1848, but have been for years well-conducted *pères de famille*. The number so treated is, of course, enormously exaggerated. These arrests, and the law which has sanctioned them, have produced, as it was intended

they should, much fear; but they have excited more irritation. I do not think that he was ever so unpopular among the working classes in Paris. The natural effects of that unpopularity will not be prevented by compression. He is compressing an elastic gas. Some day the resisting force will be greater than the compressing force, and then woe to those who are near to the explosion.

Julius Mohl to Miss Bonham Carter.

Paris, March 12, 1858.

MY DEAR HILLY,

There is not a shadow of truth in the story of our having been warned by the police. We wag our tongues as freely as ever. Their actual line of policy is to appear indifferent about tongues, and only to care for revolvers, of which we are not suspected. I hear stories of people being warned, but do not believe it. It is a most curious state of things, and not unlike what one hears of Naples, only that the official people here are not so barbarous; but I mean the state of lawlessness and the entire separation between government and the public. I will give you some examples. There is a small monthly paper defending the Gallican Church theories, particularly contesting the pope's right to make single-handed dogmas. The editor was called to that devout man Espinasse, Minister of the Interior, and the following dialogue ensued:—

Minister. You are always attacking the immaculate conception, but we will not allow you to go on attacking dogmas.

Abbé. But it is no dogma in France. This is precisely our stronghold. The liberties of the Gallican Church allow of no dogmas to be declared by the pope without an Œcumenical Council.

Minister. I am not going to dispute about theology. You are not to speak against the immaculate conception.

Abbé. But the Protestants laugh at it in all their journals; why should not we too attack it?

Minister. The Protestants? That is quite another affair. The emperor has ordered me to suppress your paper if you talk any more of this business.

Exit Abbé in despair, and meditating to let his paper drop.

Here is another dialogue, *dramatis personæ* an ex-councillor of state and an actual deputy.

Ex-Councillor. I have been at Mazas to examine the state of the

heating of the prison, and have found that the prisoners must be better warmed.

Deputy (languishingly). Really?

Ex-Councillor. You don't seem to take an interest in it; but I took this trouble in your interest, and you will be the better for it when this government tumbles down, and you are sent to Mazas.

Deputy. Alas! it is not to Mazas they will send me in that case, as I have voted for the law on the suspects.

Another—*personæ* Old Biot and I.

Biot. So you were not at the College of France yesterday during the emperor's visit?

I. I did not know that he had gone there.

Biot. I was just going out, but remained until he was gone in great anxiety, and waiting impatiently.

I. Why, what could you be anxious for?

Biot. I was afraid some student or so might cross his path and do him a mischief. Fortunately nothing happened.

These little things are nothing to people who do not know this country; but to you they will show what a happy family we are here, and how liberty, confidence, and security flourish.

After her annual visit to London, Madame Mohl went to stay with her relations in Sussex. She gives the following description to Miss Bonham Carter, who was staying in the Rue du Bac, of her pilgrimage to the tombs of her ancestors. Her reflections on the character of the English upper classes must be taken as an outbreak of petulance. Indeed, both M. and Madame Mohl saw very clearly, and spoke and wrote their minds with a certain amount of exaggeration and great impartiality of the shortcomings of the various nations with whom they came in contact. English, Germans, French, Americans, Italians, Hungarians, all suffer in their turn.

St. Leonard's, June 4, 1858.

DEAR HILLY,

We left Thursday morning. We went by Brighton to Chichester to see the tomb of my grandfather, Captain Hay, of my

uncle, of my brother. All died long before I was born. My grandfather was buried in 1788, but we found the grave; and, as I had been brought up by his widow on stories of his youth and his ship, and all his great qualities, and a letter of compliments from the Admiralty is treasured up, and I have the Scotch feeling for relations, it was a great gratification. We found out an old lady who had been servant when my mother was visiting in 1807—such a nice woman; and a churchwarden, a glazier, who would take no money. Whenever I have to do with the people of that class here, I fall so in love with my countryfolk that I'm ready to cry with tenderness; but the moment I mount into the gentlefolks, my tears are dried up. Their vulgarity, their stupid admiration of riches, rank, and success, make me quite sick. All nobility of heart, all naturalness, all unconsciousness and good sense, remain among the people; but I should be very sorry to take away their simplicity by putting into their heads that they are to govern, for then they would get like the others.

I was reading a book called "John Halifax." The author wants to show her blame of the love of money and finery, and shows all the time the importance she attaches to it. It's like "Tom Brown." The author shows, unknown to himself, the intense empty-patedness of boys, and fancies he is showing them to advantage.

It was delightful to stay with Madame Mohl in a country house, and in August, 1858, I met her at the Archer Clives' at Whitfield, where there was a large gathering for the Hereford Musical Festival. She had the foreign love for sitting in the open air, and a chosen few used to collect round her as she sat under the trees, listening to her discourse. The weather was beautiful. She was not overtired, as she often was in London, and I never remember her more brilliant. She went back with me over the hills to Malvern. There was no railroad at that time, and we climbed to the top of the stage-coach to enjoy the scenery, her admiration for it surpassing even her terror at her unusual altitude.

Meanwhile M. Mohl was in London. Even if his business had allowed them to come together, it would have been against Madame Mohl's principles. She wrote—

Married folk should always separate when they visit, because they each are then making friends and amusement for each other, and when they remeet they are the more entertaining. In this country it is supposed they adore each other (it's all a hum) so much that they never need do anything to amuse each other; but that I totally deny, and why people should cease to play the agreeable because they live together, I know not.

She wrote to her niece Ida—

Translation.

I left your uncle in London, perfectly enchanted, in the first place, at being there, and then at finding the Athenæum open, and all the boys, or most of them, there. Of these "boys," the youngest is fifty-five. The age of the oldest is unknown, but Crawfurd, one of the most delightful, is eighty-four. Now, your uncle goes gossiping with all this folk, who dote upon him, for he speaks English with the *je ne sais quoi* which is wanting in his French.

M. Mohl wrote to Miss Bonham Carter—

41, Beaumont Street, London.

I am perfectly delighted with my liberty, and with London as always, but I am fallen at the Athenæum into a set whose spirits beat mine all to nothing. They are a set of *savans*—Thomas, Falconer, Fergusson, and their chums—a champagne-drinking, rollicking crew, which make me appear like a gander among sailors, the more so as I never drink wine or even coffee in this exciting place. But I must set off for the Museum, so good morning to you. I will try to get among sober people—Sir E. Tennant, Wilson, Fox, Senior, if he is here, or Stanley, who I hope has not become very wild at Oxford.

41, Beaumont Street, Friday.

I have just got your kind letter of Thursday. I will wait for the one you announce me, to see how I can manage to see Flo and all of you; perhaps not from here, as I depend on the missionaries a good deal, and they are all over the country. To-day is a great gathering of them here, and a dinner given to me, when I shall see all the Chinese missionaries who can be collected. It is possible that my business may be finished this evening, but I don't believe it, although it is much advanced.

Else I have little more to do here—a little business with the Royal Society, which I hope to terminate to-morrow, and a more complicated one with the East India Company, which I am afraid will be impossible, if Wilson does not come back on Monday, which is doubtful. You know I always delight in London, even when it is as empty as now. There is really nobody, except a few who congregate at the clubs, as their household is broken up, and they go and come to town like strangers. I stumbled on Monckton Milnes, who came from Normandy; he only traversed the town. General Briggs is gone; so are Cureton, Morley, Wilson, and *tutti quanti*. General Fox is just gone, to my vexation. I was to pass a few days with him at Kensington, but Lady Mary became ill, and they are at Tunbridge Wells now. This solitude has interfered with my seeing and studying some establishments I wished to see; but all London is to me a standing and growing wonder, and I walk about as if I was at Pekin, staring at things and trying to comprehend them. I was down at Oxford for twenty-four hours to see newly bought manuscripts. There is nothing for me. Saw old Bandinell and Cox, and got an apartment in All Souls, as Max Müller is the only resident fellow there, and has at his disposal a porter, a cook, a butler, and twelve idle servants. There has never been such an establishment of monstrous abuses. I dined at Stanley's, where I found Madame and her daughter-in-law, who had held me for a myth, because my wife is always gallivanting about alone.

I had to come back on Holy Sabbath—no small matter. The only available train was at seven o'clock in the morning, and so the college door was to be opened at half-past six, a thing never seen in All Souls, but achieved after all with some difficulty. The substitution of the sabbath for all religion in this country is one of the most curious phenomena I have seen anywhere. You may imagine that I have been in booksellers' back rooms, but have found very little. They get no books from the East, and all my preaching at the companies and the missionaries seems to produce no effect. I will go to-day to the China Evangelization Society to see if they have a store of the books their missionaries have produced, but shall most likely be disappointed.

It is the incredible number of great interests concentrated here and known all over the world in their own sphere, and entirely unknown here, except amongst their distinct circle, which makes London

what it is. I believe that not even Rome, in the time of its greatest power, was to compare to London in riches, in power, and in multifarious influence on the world; and happily, on the whole, this influence is humane and healthy. Whatever this grumbling nation may say about humbug, etc. (there is, no doubt, a great deal of it), it must take the form of something useful and humane, and if it does not come up to its pretensions, it is obliged to do at least something, or it will soon be swallowed up. I was the other day present at a consultation about the arrangement of new missionary stations amongst the Makololo and the Matabele tribes, to co-operate with Livingstone along the Zambesi and in the interior of South Central Africa. These people knew little or nothing of the cotton-growing association in the Bay of Biapa, which pursues quite a similar line in East Central Africa. When I talked of this at dinner I was received with sneers about the canting sleek missionaries, etc., and this by people who had themselves done good service in India and elsewhere, and who are themselves looked upon by the missionaries as tyrants and bloodsuckers. However, I suppose all this is well enough, and that they do keep one another to their work.

I am going to Atherstone as soon as my wife is saturated with music at Hereford, but I don't know exactly when this will be.

I have done nothing worth speaking of; made a few acquaintances —for instance, Admiral Fitzroy, whom I know from his books. Got a few books, but not those I wanted most. This town excites me strangely. I drink no wine, nor anything but water and tea or coffee; am walking for ever, and as tired as any number of dogs. But it is all the same, I am in a perpetual fever.

Thursday.

I am utterly confounded with the riches of London, and the power which is concentrated in this town, but its extent makes it difficult to live in; it takes me an hour, in a fast driving-omnibus, to go to the mission-house in Bloomsbury Street, and if one misses the person half one's day is done for.

I am studying the Post Office here. I tried to become acquainted with Rowland Hill, but could not. It is incredible what they have done, particularly in the internal arrangement, to insure the rapidity and security of the deliveries. There are many other subjects I wished to be able to see, ragged schools amongst them, but cannot.

I am rather scandalized at the luxury of the people, which goes, it seems to me, far beyond want and comfort; but, with all its faults, this is a very great nation as nations go, and approaches a state of civilization nearer than all the others, even the Chinese, as far as I can judge.

M. and Madame Mohl met at Cold Overton, whence he proceeded to Germany, while she settled herself in Paris for the winter. She wrote to Miss Bonham Carter—

Mr. Mohl is at Stuttgart; he will be back, I suppose, about the 5th, and bring Ida. I am enjoying myself mightily. I had a dinner party yesterday; I hope for another on Friday. I shall go to "Norma" to-night, and to something on Saturday. I dine out every day, and set up such cantrips it's quite scandalous. You should hear Julie! I have not been to look at your atelier; it makes me dismal to think you are not working there. I can't think where I'm to put my old furniture which you lodged; I wish you had burnt it. I'm like the man who travelled with Collegno. After they had been robbed of everything, when he got into the carriage he stretched himself out, saying, "Law! how comfortable we are; we have so much room," quite forgetting how he had been used.

She had time for drawing and reading in spite of the "cantrips," and for several letters to her friend Hilly.

Rue du Bac, 1858.

I shall be very happy to see your American friend. You know, my dear, that you need not be so mighty particular, for I have given up taking violently to people, and they are never dangerous, except when one fancies one likes them very much, or *will* like them very much, and one admits them into one's privacy, and then it's an awful thing. But I have been cured of that completely; it has been a salutary warning to me, and now I'm civil to new folk. I invite them as it may suit, and know them in a simmering way, instead of *saisir*-ing, as the cooks say roast meat should be done; by which means the ordinary run don't annoy me, as the Fridays were made for them.

I have been drawing in pastel from busts, and find it very improving; I do them so quick to what I did. I find the best way

is to do over the same, or nearly the same thing, as quick as I can (not carelessly), and after a few I have wonderfully improved in quickness. The fact is we all try to do the *finesses* first, whereas the masses ought alone to occupy us, and the *finesses* come afterwards. It seems ridiculous, at my years and discretion, to be finding out how to improve; my only comfort is that Michael Angelo wrote at eighty about some discoveries he had just made, and painted himself as a child in a go-cart, as an emblem of his learning-state. Oh, if we could but live two hundred years and be young at a hundred, how much better it would be!

She never succeeded, however, in getting over her fancies. She wrote a little later—

I liked B—— a great deal better two years ago; she has become vulgarized. It is all over; the tide has not been taken. I saw in her then aptitudes that I do not see now. I am a person of imagination. I cannot excite myself at will; it must come of itself. Two years ago I had a fancy for her, but she gave me great pain, and the odd thing is that I cannot now understand how I ever came to care so much for her. Affection once stopped never resumes its course; the person one loved has another face, another mind. One preserves the bones, the skeleton, of one's affection, but all the grace, the charm, are gone. Poor B—— has not the slightest suspicion of what she has lost.

I forget if I told you that Mr. Browning read me Carlyle's letters, and that every word bites into the very flesh. They are better than his books. I know but one creature who writes something in that way; it is Mirabeau's father. His letters are the finest in the French language for style. His son was a rhetorician compared to him. I'm sure Browning is an original writer, he is so very genuine.

I know Wordsworth has introduced the fashion of making fatigue and study necessary to understand a page. Be it so; but when I have conned it over some time, I expect not to find useless pronouns and faults of logic. These verses you mention appear to me absolute stringing of words with none of the spirit—the *je ne sais quoi*—that makes verse poetry. The worst of it is that one can no more say what *that* is than one can catch aroma out of coffee, or the honey in one's ear which makes some music delightful, and most modern

music nothing but a combination of sounds. I say sometimes to myself, Is it in me or in the thing? Yet, as poor Galileo said, "but still it moves." I am tortured by the gaping admiration of the young generation for such verses, and try to persuade myself I am wrong; but still I have no pleasure in the rattle of words. However, I will not give up the battle, but read every syllable with as much goodwill as if my comfort was at stake; and to a certain extent it is, for though I danced Sir Roger de Coverley last night that the set might be made up, I really am afraid, when I read these rhymes, that I am waxing very old, and wish for a little glass of the *fontaine de Jouvence.* A taste for beauty, any beauty, certainly is the liquid therein.

I wish —— would read every day Madame Roland's memoirs, to show her how much mischief people may do with the best intentions. Madame Roland wrote circulars and all sorts of things (very clever) to stir up the French people, and much of the horrible state of the French nation at that time may be traced to these circulars, followed up by rascals. The end was the guillotine to all that was honest in the nation. Those memoirs, well read and studied, form the grandest lesson to those scribbling, busy, meddling, conceited people who *will* cram their notions into everybody and think they have found out the philosopher's stone. But *no;* it's no lesson. Perfect conceit is unteachable, unimprovable. I *do* admire people supposing the world has gone on six thousand years badly, but that their lucubrations and managements will set everything right; whereas it is as much as any one person *can* do to look after any *one* other and do no mischief.

I read quantities about the French Revolution. I am charmed with Carlyle's "Cromwell," who *is* a great man. Nothing can be more curious than to compare the two revolutions, only, unfortunately, one sees the English one through a long distant glass, which dims all the details; but, if I were not afraid of writing a John Bull work more Bullish than all the quarterlies, I could compare the two, and draw fearful conclusions for the French, only I should get lapidated. The best French history of revolution that I have read is Barante's; it is the fifth.

Oh! a new man, Guillaume, has written a history of the Revolution, and has taken Marat for his hero! and, woful to say, some one (I forget who) said to me, "There's a history by Guillaume—

very clever." It's dreadful to see how weak minds are perverted by these books. François told me this history is very stupid. Another by Bucher et Roux contains garbled extracts of speeches. *They* have adopted Robespierre. Bucher is a very strenuous Catholic, and says there are but two great spirits, Jesus Christ and Robespierre! "Oh, Jerusalem!" etc. How can a nation go on with such writers who would not write thus if they were not read. Madame Roland's memoirs, though very objectionable as to her want of delicacy, are the best medicine I know to all this, because she saw these men, and makes no after-time theories, but just tells facts, being in the midst of them.

Rue du Bac, Paris, 1858.

The people who live here have a notion that to live anywhere else is worse than death. Madame G—— is obliged to leave Paris for want of money. They have a farm in Normandy, and they can live there on their own land very comfortably. She actually wants to have boarders here rather than go, and Josephine can't pity her sufficiently for this great misfortune. If she saw any very delightful people, or had a passion for music or painting! Not a bit; she sees the stupidest people imaginable, and cares for nothing of the sort. I remember, in 1848, M. de Barante, who was ambassador at St. Petersburg, came back to Paris in consequence of the Revolution. They had an estate in Auvergne, and went to live there all the year round, because they could not afford an apartment in Paris. You never heard so much pity bestowed on any human being. It is true M. de Barante had spent all his life in the most cultivated society here. He was clever, and made to enjoy it; but, then, he was past seventy, had a good château, and a wife who had been a beauty and whom we may suppose he had married for love. It used to amuse me to hear him pitied for what in England is thought the last happiness—to become a landed proprietor and live on one's own estate appears to me the ambition of all those who have their fortunes to make. The Barantes were always talked of as being alone, and I said, "Well, but are not they a good *ménage?*" "Oh dear, yes; but how dreadfully *triste* to be all alone!" This is modern to a certain degree, for in Madame de Sévigné's letters she does not pity people for living in their châteaux, and when they are banished from court she visits in their châteaux quantities of people,

and from her one may gather that many lived there all the year round, and seemed merry enough.

. . . . . .

I enjoyed the wedding mightily. The Abbé Duquerry, another celebrity, performed it, and made really a beautiful speech, so refined, so full of the essence of what marriage ought to be, that I was perfectly astounded at a priest comprehending so well. It put me in mind of a sermon of Massillon's against love, which he paints so beautifully that I would not have a young lady read it, not for impropriety—no, no; it would be dangerous merely from giving all the glow, the charm that a refined imagination can give, to the subject, without a touch of earth which dull reality is apt to mingle.

It is no wonder that Madame Mohl's thoughts were occupied with love and marriage at this time, for the "charming young Tyrolese," whom they met for the first time in 1852, proposed in 1855 to Mademoiselle Ida, to her uncle's dismay; her family could not bear to think of her living in Hungary, and the offer was refused, but it was renewed again in 1858, when, as the young man was succeeding in public life ("My dear," Madame Mohl wrote, "Franz is so clever, he is sure to get on"), and the young lady was favourably inclined, the consent of the elders was obtained. Madame Mohl, although the principal sufferer by the loss of her adopted daughter, did all she could to smooth away difficulties; her sympathy was always warmly excited by a marriage of suitability and affection, while she equally strongly disapproved of cold-hearted and interested alliances. Mademoiselle Ida was married in May, 1859, from her father's house at Heidelberg, M. and Madame Mohl being present on the occasion.

Meanwhile the Italian war had broken out. In the panic caused by the *attentat*, the colonels of the French army addressed a congratulatory letter to the emperor, reflecting at the same time on England for harbouring assassins, because some of the conspirators had resided in this country.

The tone of this letter was so threatening that it awoke a burst of indignation throughout England. In a moment war appeared probable, and its anticipation gave rise to the formation of our volunteer force. Surprised at the warlike spirit thus displayed, Louis Napoleon endeavoured to calm the English nation, while he lent a favourable ear to Cavour, promised him the assistance of France, and on the first day of 1859 addressed a menacing speech to the Austrian Ambassador, Baron Hübner. The war broke out on May 1, and on the 13th the French army joined the Sardinians. The battle of Magenta was fought on June 4, and was followed by the victory of Solferino on the 24th. After these two victories, Louis Napoleon patched up a hasty peace at Villafranca on July 11. Austria surrendered. Lombardy and Savoy and Nice were subsequently given to France as her share of the spoil.* It is to these events that the following letters allude.

From Julius Mohl.

March 6, 1859.

MY DEAR HILLY,

I suppose you have read in the *Times* the stupendous declaration of this fellow here, that he is a calumniated man, who never thought of war, and has made no preparations! It struck us here dumb with astonishment, and I am delighted with it, firstly, because I do not like war; secondly, because the fellow shows himself in his true colours, as the great liar, whose whole life is a lie. It is something altogether incredible.

I have been ailing, which makes me always *melancholic*, as all that comes from that inconvenient and unruly member of the body-politic, the liver; but I am getting better, as I see from being less easily offended by small matters.

June, 1859.

I have got to-day a letter from Ida; she is quite happy in their barbarous country, and laughs at her domestic difficulties.

* Lombardy was afterwards handed over by France to Piedmont.

'What a country! And why do the Austrians care for influence at Naples, when they have so much to do at home?' 'But what is the use of talking politics? I was the other day at Vertbois, at Madame Tourguénieff's; they are, for a wonder, all well. M. de Tourguénieff is in Russia to arrange and liberate the villages he has inherited; but finds the greatest difficulties, which was to be expected.

Last night there was an illumination, but nothing was illumined except the public buildings, and those shops which depend on the police, as tobacco, wine, and such like—hardly any other; and no window whatever. It was a most shabby affair. If the war lasts it will grow less and less popular; the expenses are fearful, and the loss of life much greater than they acknowledge.

They never print the telegrams as they arrive, and have been now cooking for three days the one on that doubtful battle of Magenta without bringing it out. But the battles are nothing to the maladies and the exhaustion from fatigue. They say here that the French lost fifteen thousand men at Magenta; that MacMahon saved the army by coming against his orders, while the fellow himself was on the tower of Novara, looking with a spy-glass at the battle two leagues off. They now print here that he was in the thick of the fight, which we know is not true from the letters of his *entourage;* but the lying of this *boutique* passes all conception.

But I want to talk of something else, and don't know what. Ida has written from Hungary curious accounts. When she wanted wood for the kitchen, she was advised to buy it in the forest; send a cart to fetch it (if anybody would lend it), and get her husband to send for a prisoner in jail to split it. When she wanted to buy milk, the answer was she might send to the archbishop's farm—they would willingly give it; and when she demurred, they said she might send to the burgomaster, who would take it as an honour. The *Jew* of the place being just then at Pesth, nothing was to be bought, but when she landed from the steamboat she found a *calêche* with four horses to bring her home (a quarter of a mile's distance).

The young element was seldom long absent from the Rue du Bac, while the place of the baby was occupied by the cats, of which M. and Madame Mohl were equally fond. "This was in the reign of Pussy the Great," he would sometimes

say, alluding to a very superior Angora which flourished in the Abbaye-au-Bois. There was a frequent interchange of kittens going on between the Mohls and the Nightingale family.

From Madame Mohl.

DEAR HILLY,

We have all been kitten-hunting. I have found one not more than five or six weeks old; it is not as pretty as I could wish, because it's white with a few spots; it will have a bushy tail. Don't be mistrustful of that when you see it; it is the very short tails when they are very young that turn out the best. Madame Jeanron brought one, a very pretty one; but it is six months old, and Julie declares it won't get accustomed to a new place. I don't believe it; but of course its play will not go on so long as a younger one. It is not the right time of the year, and they are mostly disposed of; that is why we have had such hunts and not quite succeeded neither. But it will be a pretty kit; it has a very high forehead, the hair is soft and good, though it's not so fluffy as I have seen them; but I think it is the best we have seen. Julie, Madame Jeanron, the Laugels, and myself have all looked about, and bothered every one else to look. The pretty ones had all just been given away, or were six months old. I will put it in a basket with a bottle of milk, poor love!

All bemoan the horrible slaughter in Italy; you have no idea of it. That is the reason why the peace was botched up. Such thousands died of thirst when they were wounded; no one gave them any help. In large towns where there were gentlefolks they were taken care of, but the inhumanity of the people was terrible—the same to all; in fact, the *peasants* in Lombardy prefer the Austrians. It is what you "democraws" will not believe, but I have heard it from so many that I'm convinced it is true, and one or two Italians have told me the same; not so the higher classes nor the townsfolk, but it accounts for this fellow's making peace, for he found it was not so easy as he fancied. Oh dear, to think of human beings tormenting each other during this short life, when six feet of earth will contain us all; and the total separation of all moral feeling from religion!

L. N. will not go to war with England now, and as we begin to show our long teeth, perhaps he never will. If we can make an

alliance with all Germany, offensive and defensive, we shall save oceans of blood all over Europe. We are not aware enough of our importance, or of the impossibility of their resisting him without us; but if they had the moral certainty we should uphold them, all Germany would be reconciled to us, and now they hate us. I would devote my life to travelling from England to Germany to carry messages, if I could make my stupid country understand their interest, which is all on the side of morality; if they would be just they would be the better for it, which is not always the case.

Your kitten was born at an artist's perfectly mad about cats. I asked what were its antecedents. "Il a une figure qui n'est pas d'un chat moderne," was the description given by the owner; the other, poor thing, was bought nobody knows where. It's wonderful the difference both in their civilization and natural talent; yours is of a higher order, evidently. It's a curious thing that several powers have been developed in my cat since she has become a mother; but having kittens too young injures their growth very much.

Early in 1860 M. Mohl was appointed president of the Academy. He wrote to Miss Bonham Carter—

Do you know what the peasants call a *rabouteur?* It is a man who has the knack of setting dislocated members, and all the country people flock to them in preference to the surgeon. Now I am a *rabouteur littéraire*, and all the hideously distorted and dislocated literary beggars seem to congregate here to get their miserable members put to rights again.

Now, to my utmost horror, they want to make me president of the Academy for two years. I have fought shy of this, and declined it very often; but Naudet, the secrétaire-général, is half-crazy, and the doctor sends him to Italy to get away from all sources of irritation here; and he would not go except I accepted this presidency, because he is afraid that during his absence something horrible might be concocted—I don't know what; he only gave me mysterious and unintelligible hints. My only hope is that soon other members may wish for it, and oust me, as the whole concern is hateful to me, and not even in the interest of the Academy, for reasons with which I will not try your patience.

January 18.

This scribbling has been lying here for I don't know how long. I have since this been driven about like a humming-top, with miserable business and plagues of all sorts—dinners and breakfasts—and have become very bilious. I sit here with a bilious headache, which makes my eyes swim, so excuse any incoherence in my thoughts or style. We have got to-day letters from Ida; she is always delighted with her lot, and the only thing she regrets in Kaloska is the absence of an Italian opera. I should not have thought of this one want in a barbarous place, without society, and drowned in eternal mud, so as to make going out a matter of the greatest difficulty.

While I am writing arrives a very kind letter from you, with plenty of news of the cats. I don't wonder you give away the one with that astounding hoarse voice, and am glad it gets into kind hands by virtue of its tail; but I wonder that the little black devil should be so ragged-looking!

Lady Palmerston is a donkey to believe that Walewski, who is a flunkey, could hinder his nephew in anything. He was allowed to go on talking as a cloak to the scamp's indecision, and was thrown away when the fellow had ascertained that he could break his word at Villafranca without the Austrians beginning war again, because they are ruined. But how Palmerston, Lord Johnny, and Lord Cowley can be such a set of oafs and owls as to put any trust in this fellow, is more than conceivable. Have they already forgotten the affair of the colonels, and the crusade he preached in all his papers against England only six weeks ago? And now they ally themselves to him because he repudiated his own conditions of the peace of Villafranca.

But they are besotted about Italy. One should think the first and only duty of man was to liberate Italy, and how it is to be liberated from the *French* is a problem they will not easily solve. How any man can ally himself, after his whole career, to this arch-liar and traitor, is more than one can conceive. But there is Cobden, who is quite taken up with this fellow, and negotiates a treaty of commerce. This fellow, I am convinced, makes all these concessions to bind the English to peace when he attacks Prussia, which will most likely be his first move. His only art is to isolate the other powers, and to beat one after the other, until the turn of England comes, which will certainly destroy him; but it will suffer

for having helped him to become very powerful. It is impossible that he should ever be quiet. I believe he intended so at first, because he thought it easier to govern France than he finds it, and this becomes every day more difficult; and so he turns to the drum to keep them occupied and interested in something other than their misery at home.

Our master, the scamp, has turned over a new leaf in his wonderful book of *charlataneries*, and now all France is to take again to making railroads, canals, harbours; build parsonages, and reward science and art; and the English are to be caught with a new *tarif*, which will give Cobden great glory in Manchester and elsewhere.

Villemain has written a pamphlet in favour of the pope, which shows that his hatred of our beast is such that he adopts all his enemies; so is my wife become quite papal, and many other people, who else are little given to the approval of the red woman of Babylon. This will give you a slight idea how high passion runs here. Other liberals like Renan, who hates the pope more than this fellow, approve of the Roman business. There have appeared one hundred pamphlets about it, as I understand, and many more are printing; but the affair of the custom-house *tarif* will set people on another track.

February 1st, 1860.

. . . Bunsen is here, and is made a great fuss about, which he takes kindly. He is to dine at this house to-morrow with Villemain, Cousin, Mignet, and other great guns. The other day I dined with him at Mrs. Schwabe's; but as I saw after dinner clear intentions of having music, I ran away. I had a long discussion with Cobden about this treaty. He ought to see that no treaty ought to be made with a fellow who has just broken his word to Austria, and wants to get out of that scrape by flattering the Italian and the free-trade passions of the English, whom he bullies and flatters by turns; and then he is arming all the while more than ever, while he beats the drum to his great show of peaceful undertakings—building of ports, draining the country, cultivating the waste places, lending the money of the state to manufacturers and agriculturists, and the rest of this programme, which looks really like the prospectus of a new joint-stock company, or an advertisement of Holloway's pills, or Morrison's universal medicine. Cobden said that he had never threatened

England, and he found that this man was always in the right. "Well," I said, "if you have never heard of the addresses of the colonels, nor seen any of the articles the fellow filled his papers with only two months ago, you had better look at them." He said it would take twenty years to bring a French chamber to take off a prohibition. "Well," I answered, "perhaps it would; it took you ten years to persuade England, but it is done for ever. But what can you expect from the change of a *tarif* brought on without discussion and without the conviction of the country? And then, if there had been a chamber, it would take twenty years too to persuade it to begin a war, while this fellow is always ready and able; and if you feel comfortable in his neighbourhood, you are more valiant than wise." "Oh," he said, "I do not think he will be so imprudent as to attack England. I said, "Perhaps not, as long as you keep ships and troops enough ready, and let your volunteers not get rusty, and go on casting thirty Armstrong guns a week." But it would only tire you to go on with this. To-day the Government has suppressed the *Univers*, Veuillot's *ultramontain* journal. He has richly merited it, because he was a principal instrument in bringing over the clergy to this fellow; but now they cannot bear his polemics about the pope. It will teach the bishops that liberty of speech may have some merit. The state of things is such that it cannot remain as it is, and the fellow will get out of it by a new war, which also he will gain again; and so he will go on until a new coalition spits him out of Europe as it did his uncle. The race is essentially barbarous and incompatible with civilization. The uncle was a brute, and this one is a conspirator; but until there is a universal coalition nothing will do, because this nation is always ready to go to war, and is stronger than any one isolated, and Europe will be covered with blood and ruin before we get rid of him.

* *

February 4.

I don't know how long this scribble has begun. Lacordaire, the General of the Dominicans, has been elected to the Académie Française; they had no decent candidates, and he is a man of far more talent than the others. They have been very much disgusted with the literary gipsies whom they have taken to please the public, because they sell instantly their votes to Government. This is not to be feared from this monk, who is interdicted from preaching in

Paris. I am delighted with the destruction of the *Univers;* it was a vile paper, and had done very much for this Government. Now the ultramontanes will begin to see that liberty and publicity are good for something. I have held up yesterday to Bonetty the mirror of their misdoings, and how this servility has weakened them so that this fellow can now slap them in the face. He sighs and agrees to it. But there is an end to my paper.

So good night, my dear Hilly.

MY DEAR HILLY,

There is much news here, but the difficulty is to know what is true and how far it is true. The lies begin in the Tuileries, and grow monstrous as they penetrate in the public. It seems that this fellow has reminded the Bishop of Poitiers, a rank ultramontane, that there is such a place as Vincennes. I hope it is true, as it would show that he is becoming rabid and desperate. It seems Cavour, who wants to get out of his promise to give up Savoy, and to prove that Walewski has lied to Lord Cowley, has sent a copy of this treaty, concluded in March, 1859, to Lord John. They are a precious set of rascals, and Lord Cowley, Lord Johnny, and the rest of them, the greatest owls ever seen.

The papal exasperation goes on; the Bishop of Orleans has just written an article, for which he will be brought before the police *correctionnelle* by the *Siècle*, which he treats as a journal *sans honneur*. The clergy are learning a great lesson—that liberty may be good for something; but they will learn it only as long as they are oppressed and forget it instantly after. The red woman of Babylon is unimprovable, and all harm she comes to is well merited. If the pope could eat up the emperor I would applaud, and if the emperor eats up the pope I can't be sorry, only I hope he will not agree with him. What a mess this fellow has made of the world! He is such a scoundrel that even when he is right, as in the trade business, he does it in a way which makes it unpalatable and dangerous. I hope yet to see him and the senate flourishing at Noukahiva, and founding there a prosperous colony of sharpers. *Ainsi soit-il.*

God bless you, my dear Hilly.

Paris, February 11, 1860.

MY DEAR HILLY,

I write in a great hurry, and before going to one of these confounded committees, where people lose their time and temper; but the world seems to me as full of them as of flies, and most likely both have their appropriated uses, although I cannot see them.

Nothing particularly new here, but that this rascal is conspiring with everybody in Europe who is willing to listen—the Hungarians, the Danes, the Bulgarians, amongst whom he has in hand a hopeful outbreak which he manages by emissaries. I got yesterday two numbers of a new German journal, *Strasburger Correspondent*, which he has founded in Strasburg to preach imperialism in the Rhine provinces; he is likened there to Jesus Christ. He wanted to found four journals in Germany itself, but until now could not manage it. He has one in Geneva, the *Nord* in Brussels, has wanted to buy the *Gazette d'Augsbourg*, as Cotta told me, and promised to pay handsomely in money and ribands. He has encouraged the Neapolitans to go to Ancona, which would have brought on a new Italian war and a Muratist dynasty. It seems the Austrians have dissuaded the fool in Naples to put his foot into this trap.

April 10, 1860.

Paris, May 6, 1860.

MY DEAR HILLY,

I ought to have answered your last letter a long time ago, but what with committees, with lecturing, with proof-sheets, with candidates and beggars of all degree, what with Ranke and the series of dinners he brought in his train, my time has been frittered away I don't know how. There is an uncommonly fine kitten educating for Florence. I suppose my wife has written about it; it is a very gentle and confiding little thing, and looks so good-natured.

There is nothing particularly new here, only we get gradually the scandalous details of the indecent farce of universal suffrage in Savoy and Nice. I hope these things will be instructive to England about democratic votes and £6 voters, if anything can enlighten the imperturbable security of Johnny Bright, Cobden, and Co.; but the misfortune is that the English will never believe that the experience of other people is applicable to their superior sense and estate, although there is no reason why similar laws should not produce

similar effects. Look at the Yankees, where honest men shrink from public service before universal suffrage!

Here all is glorious for the moment. Thiers, Cousin, and the like are almost becoming Bonapartists, which is, in fact, their real nature, and they have only accidentally been diverted from it by falling into constitutional times. Their morals consist in admiring a successful scoundrel, and they think it the highest stretch of patriotism to sell the liberty and happiness of France and the world for a new province. However, in general, I believe the people do not admire the manner of the annexation, and do not care much for the gain of it; but the scamps who call themselves *les politiques* think it a great stroke of cleverness. The last ball the empress gave in her mother's house here cost £4000 in building over the court-yard and garden, etc. I suppose in Sardanapalus's time things went on very like this. Do you recollect a little good-natured, jesuitical, sweet-spoken body, M. B——, our neighbour? He is in great trouble. He published the *Annales de Philosophie Religieuse*—a monthly paper destined to initiate the country clergy into as much of new doings in science, history, and theology as may be good for their orthodox health.

In his number for March he took from the *Moniteur* the pope's encyclic and the scamp's answer, and for this he is threatened with lawsuits, warnings, and suppression. He declares in vain that he took them from the *Moniteur;* nothing will satisfy M. Billaul but absolute silence on the pope's affairs. I delight in this, because all these clerical rabble were enchanted when the persecution fell on the others; they thought themselves favoured and secure. It will teach them the advantages of a common legal state. Montalembert, Veuillôt, and others have gone through the same school, and been taught with the rod. But it is altogether a gloomy look out for Europe, and I have got a sort of horror of newspapers; my consolation is that it may be my liver which jaundices everything. So let us talk of something else, if I can think of a bit of news that will amuse you; but I really know very little. I called the other day on poor Lady Augusta,* who is a theme as far from amusement as well can be. She is drowned in the deepest melancholy, and Lady Charlotte lies in a garret, from which she cannot be brought down. The house takes gradually the dismantled air of a place to be aban-

* Her mother, Lady Elgin, died in 1860.

doned, and it is altogether more melancholy than can be told. She is to remain six weeks to wind up her affairs.

I am very glad that Hugh has gone to the Cape, and with so good and intelligent a man as Sir George Grey. I was very much struck ten years ago with Sir George's first book on the savages of George's Sound, West Australia. It was the first book, and I believe is even now the only one, in which the savages got fair play and a just appreciation.

We visited Paris again in the spring. Madame Mohl was impatient for our arrival. She wrote—

What is become of you all? Madame de Circourt told me you were expected in the beginning of April, but seeing no one I begin to be uneasy. The Ristori is here. I have not asked her to dine yet with the *beaux esprits*, hoping you would come, and unwilling to spend her before, for you know she is a piece of game I can't always get. Therefore tell me if I should put it off till you come, or eat it before it vanishes. Write me a scrap of news; I am as parched as an Arabian pilgrim.

We found M. and Madame Mohl open-mouthed about the treaty which my father, as a free-trader, tried to defend. He wrote in his journal—

We breakfasted with the Mohls.

Mohl. The prestige of England has been sadly shaken by the commercial treaty.* With our general ignorance of political economy, we believe that you are to gain enormously by it, and that we are to lose. It has made all the *fabricants* and proprietors of forests and mines your bitter enemies, and even your best friends are angry with you for having become parties to a trick which has enabled Celui-ci to change our whole commercial system without consulting us.

Senior. I doubt whether the treaty can have much increased your dislike of us.

Mohl. Still there was a party, the most intelligent and liberal in France, by whom you were respected, who admired your institu-

* Commercial treaty with England, negotiated by Michel Chevalier and Cobden. Signed January 23, 1860.

tions, and thought your foreign policy proud, perhaps, and overbearing, but honest. Now, these are the persons who accuse you of having sold Savoy for commerce—of having been bribed by the treaty into submission to the annexation.

Senior. The accusation is utterly false; the treaty is no bribe. The alteration of our tariff is in your favour; that is, our receiving your produce at a less duty is the only real advantage that it is to give us, and of course we could have made, and probably should have made, that alteration without a treaty. We consented to do it by treaty for your sake, not for ours. As for the annexation, you cannot accuse us of acquiescing in it, though we do not choose to go to war about it.

Mohl. Still you must admit that the transaction is open to suspicion. I wish that, if you were to have a treaty, you had taken another opportunity for it. Nor do we like to be treated as children, and told by you and by our master that we do not know what is good for us or bad for us.

The portraits of our dearest friends seldom satisfy us, and Madame Mohl was by no means pleased with Madame Le Normant's memoir of Madame Récamier. The result was fortunate, for her dissatisfaction induced her to write an article, which appeared in the *National Review* and had great success, and which she afterwards expanded into the charming little book from which I have often quoted. She added to the article a sketch of society in France from the age of chivalry, especially showing how the improved position of women in the present day is owing to that movement. She used always to extol the treatment of women in France as compared with their position in England. Her letters at this time are full of the subject.

To Miss Bonham Carter.

DEAR HILLY,

I received a beautiful letter from Mrs. Reid the very day after my last to you, full of praises of my article. She says her sister is very weak, and the truth is a visitor is a fatigue to her,

poor soul! Oh, my dear Miss Sturch, she was always so glad to put me in her attic, and I felt so at home there; but they were old-fashioned—the present finery has killed all that. Neither you nor your contemporaries nor your juniors will ever comprehend what those dear old-fashioned people were; they are completely extinct.

Barthélemy St. Hilaire has just been breakfasting here; he says he was sorry he did not see Sidney Herbert, that he might have given him some information about the army here; but the fact is our ministers are far more interested about keeping their places than about the ultimate results of their foolish measures, and they have no time to inquire into the chances of peace and war, because they are so anxious to make a successful stand against the opposite party. What hope is there from such people? None. The nation will be impoverished by ill-made, bungling measures, and L. N., who has but himself to consult, will make his negotiations and preparations while we dispute about reforms, just as in 1804.

I hope Eleanor will like her visit to Heidelberg; in my opinion nothing is so good for a girl as going away from her family to learn how to live. The great fault I find with women is their stupidity. There's a sluggishness in their brains that the male has not; yet in animals it is not so. The female, having to maintain her young, is the sharpest. Now, the human female ought to be at least as sharp, for the species depends on it; but she is not. Is it circumstances which fools call education? I never ask my way of a woman; she is sure not to know, or to give it inaccurately. In business they are clever here, but generally more grasping than the men. In short, my observations give me a higher opinion of men, morally and mentally —of course with many exceptions.

Mr. Senior wants me to publish my article with the suppressions; perhaps I have already told you so. I have an exceeding mind to put it into a book, with some more history of the female sex here. I have had such whacking compliments from several—Miss Darwin among the rest (a most discriminating woman)—that it puts me *en verve;* but it don't last.

Mrs. Reid is an excellent person; she will push on womankind when womankind is unpushable. These old people that are fond of one leave a scar in one's heart after they are gone, when one has thought little of their kindness while they were here. I can't express the pain I have at recollecting many a sin of omission in my youthful

days. Alas! I used to drive on like a fiery ship amid the furious waves which, perhaps, my own tempestuous nature created round me. Oh, if we could live again with a more subdued temperament!

I am reading "Travels in Hungary," very entertaining, by one John Paget. Franz says it is the best account he has seen. I intend to go and see Ida if Mr. Mohl will go. He don't seem to have an idea of my intention yet. He's like the French nation, and I'm like that wretch L. N., only I always think of his good.

The kittens are so droll, but I fear will not be as handsome as the mother. I spent an evening with Lady Augusta. I dined there, and we sat alone in the dark in the drawing-room, talking of the past; we both cried. Poor thing! she is so tender, her mind is so sweet.

Ida has no need of all the organization required in England, when people have children. Mr. Senior says nobody marries, it is such an affair to dress out and educate the unreasonably large families they have, that all but rich people are obliged to give up the practice. It's a pity they can't adopt a medium. If those who marry had fewer children, those who don't might marry, and have one, or two, or three. It's very hard, but all statistics will tell the same. So that every time a man has twelve children, he may be certain four or five other couples have none. There ought to be moral laws on such things.

Abbey Lodge, Hanover Gate, Regent's Park, June 7, 1860.

DEAR MRS. GASKELL,

Here I am arrived last night, and delightfully lodged at Mrs. Schwabe's, the prettiest house I ever was in, with a large garden just like the country.

I never answered your last for want of time. The advice I intended to ask was this. My article, which you are so kind as to praise, was twice as long, and I had cut off a great deal then; in short, I could make a book with the greatest ease to show that the position of the women in France was different from elsewhere. I have not the slightest pretention to make it out better than here or worse, but to show a curious historical fact which explains from far back what often appears anomalous in the manners of the country. I don't declare this pedantically, because, after all, I may see the fact bigger than it is. But all history of manners is curious—more curious, it strikes me, than histories of battles, whose varieties consist chiefly in cold steel or hot gunpowder, or hotter cannon-balls; yet people

never seem tired of them. But human feelings, and the varieties in life and manners that the human imagination has occasioned, have many more windings and turnings; but I have no notion of acting to empty benches, and if I thought my book would not be read except by my intimates, I would not write it. That is what I wanted your opinion on. The rough copy of my article is here, and if I have time I will copy it out clean and get you to read it. It is not half what I have to say (the historical part), but you may have some idea of what I mean when you have read it.

Some one writes to Mrs. Schwabe to ask for letters of recommendation for some French manufacturers to learn all the secrets of the English ones at Manchester about cotton-spinning, dyeing, etc. Now, it's an infamous shame that the English should sharpen the knife that is to cut their own throat. The very men who come to wheedle their secrets out of them would not tell them the slightest. I said so to Mrs. Schwabe, who said, "Pooh, pooh! I'm a free-trader." Ay, trade as much as you like; but a free manufacturer is very different.

The British Association met at Oxford in June, 1860, and our kind friends, Dr. and Mrs. Jeune, asked us to stay with them at Pembroke College on the occasion. They extended their invitation to Madame Mohl, and we had a most delightful and interesting visit. The town was full of remarkable people, and they all assembled at Dr. Jeune's, for he was Vice-Chancellor at the time. We were lodged in Fellows' rooms, and Madame Mohl was enchanted at the sight of the books with which her room was crowded. She seized upon Niebuhr's "History of Rome," and plunged into its contents whenever she had a minute to spare; she found it so very "nourishing," she said.

After her return to London she wrote to Mrs. Gaskell—

London, July 8, 1860.

DEAR MRS. GASKELL,

I received yours long ago with my MSS., and never had time to answer it. I *dare say* you are right as to my repeating too often the same thing, and I am *quite sure* you are right as to the mistake it

is to do so. When I have finished I shall ask unscrupulously for your advice, and you will give a good scratch with a pencil when you see any ungraceful testimony of opinion; for I agree with you that a thing should be always *let seen*, and not shown. I wish the animal who writes to be as invisible as the mechanism of our bodies. Nature has shown us the finest example of grace, hiding the hideous muscles under a beautiful skin; but one is weak and awkward, you know. I always think of my dear Dr. Johnson's answer when a lady found fault with one of his explanations in the dictionary: "Ignorance—pure ignorance, madam!" You know I am a Johnsonian like Miss Matty's sister. I greatly enjoyed Oxford, and London too. I never was made so much of, which is due to this same article. The best compliment I received was from Mrs. Monckton Milnes, who on reading it thought it her husband's, and told him so. I never should have had the perseverance to write for two whole months had it not been for my indignation at seeing Madame Récamier so ill understood, thanks to Madame Le Normant's book.

I leave London about the 16th, go to my sister's till the middle of August, then Mr. Mohl and I go to see Ida in Hungary, and the most beautiful of babies. I detest travelling now, but I must undertake this; it will, I think, be my last journey. I said so three years ago. To travel for pleasure one should be young. You know, of course, that Madame Schwabe left us in *fretta e furia* to go to M. Bunsen. I am now told he is better. She is a great loss to me, first, I am very fond of her; secondly, her house is the very thing for me—all *en l'air*, I may be as disorderly as I please, and she is always easy, so we suit as if we were made for each other. But I don't disguise my political notions, which are the very opposite to hers; for the Whigs have changed me into a most determined Tory. Perhaps, when I get home into Leicestershire, I may turn round again. I dined yesterday with three bishops! I shall grow into a pillar of the Church; they are not High, however, it was at Bishop Hampden's. I wish I had come across Mr. Stirling (author of Charles V.). I should like to know if he is still a partisan of Louis Napoleon. He is a friend of yours. Could you give Anna your new book to translate? I would ask Robert to look over it. He is a most disheartening person, and would, like all the Mohls, cut off every one's arms and legs for fear he should walk a little awry. But I have surmounted them all, and don't care a snap

for their dampings. The worst is that these Germans all know English. When I spoke of it to Mr. Mohl before Anna, "Oh," says he, "they have all regular translators at Leipsic; it's impossible to get anything"—as if these had been, like eternity, without a beginning. I could have given him a good scratch, like a pussy. I gave myself no end of trouble with my article, and talked so much about it in the house that Mr. Mohl did nothing but laugh at me—I might as well have played the flute—so I never showed it to him; he is so discouraging.

I saw Miss Carpenter at Oxford, and greatly liked her. I made quite a friendship with Mrs. Jeune, and Dr. Jeune said I must go next year to Oxford, which I had not seen in its natural state; and I should see Arthur Stanley, and Mr. Jowett, and Mr. Thompson. Do you know this latter, and the fair Zoe? They were mighty kind to me; and he has a most agreeable countenance—and worthy Dr. Daubeny. I like all these people. I must say I saw no bigotry in Oxford. Yours ever. Pray, pray write.

Madame Mohl wrote to Miss Bonham Carter from Hungary—

Kaloska, September, 1860.

This is a silly, frivolous set of people, but very elegant, with an intense vanity and love of finery; they may succeed in re-establishing some of their old abuses, and call liberty what is exactly the reverse. If the Whites of the United States should call in the Spaniards to help them to get back their black slaves, it would be very near to the Hungarian nobility trying twelve years ago to persuade the English to help them. Luckily we did not meddle; but they are very taking, and I don't wonder we believed them.

There is only one shop and that is kept by a Jew. Oh, what a funny country! Nothing but seeing could make one believe it. On the steamboat was a family of Magyars. The baby, four months or so, had earrings; the boy of five years, spurs to his boots. They have, withal, more grace than most people.

Paris, September 28, 1860.

DEAR HILLY,

I am just returned home, to my intense delight. I shall hear no more *schliff, schlaff*—it's the ugliest language under the sun;

but when anything is the fashion in England, it's no use saying a word. I have found your letter, August 19; for we have no letters sent after us, because, generally, those who want to write know where to direct. You tell me to write a few facts to contradict our gentleman's quackeries about the poor; I have been telling facts these nine years, and until the rascal lied about Savoy, which was a trifle compared to all his other doings, no mortal would believe me. The English have a whim to admire this man—let them; they never will learn but at their cost, and hardly then, that they are spending millions at this moment for fear he should invade them—and Louis Philippe resisted making war on them. The clamour at one time in 1840 was tremendous; and in 1846 they made a fuss about the Spanish marriages. This man has kept Europe on fire these nine years. They abuse the former and admire the latter. They are a set of people who admire quacks, and never look to deeds, only words; never judge from an impression of their own, and all the reasoning and arguing of plain sense is useless. It's just like their admiration for Hungarians. There's not a road to go over; the richest land has been kept in abject poverty. These nobles have had a constitution these five hundred years—what did they ever do? They keep the peasants in serfage, but when they go about Europe talking about their liberty, the English swallow it all; they won't even *look* at a plain fact.

To Mrs. Gaskell.

The greatest amusement at Kaloska was to see the pigs come home in the evening; they were so clever. I think it a very unhealthy place. I never could do anything but look at the pigs and a little at the cows—all this in the street; no pavement in the middle, but pools and puddles. Lord, what a place! and what a deliverance to get out of it! Not that Ida dislikes it; her husband and baby are so delightful.

My father and I were in Paris again in September, and found Madame Mohl full of her tour. On her way she had seen the Ober-Ammergau play, at that time little known, and she was deeply impressed and touched by it.

From Mr. Senior's journal.

September 29, 1860.—We breakfasted with Madame Mohl. She returned yesterday from a tour in Germany and Hungary. Her first stage was Ober-Ammergau, in Bavaria. She spent some days there to see the Mystery of the Passion, which has been performed there every ten years, ever since the eleventh century.

Madame Mohl. The acting was exceedingly fine, the poses magnificent, and the words simple and affecting. I was there for eight hours and never felt tired, and, what surprised me on reflection, never felt that there was the least profanation. It was a realization of the greatest event in history. The people about me were deeply affected, weeping, sobbing, almost fainting with emotion. The actors and actresses probably followed a tradition of gestures and tones which had been elaborated during eight hundred years. The inhabitants of this part of Bavaria, near the mountains of the Tyrol, inherit art, they live chiefly by miniature sculpture in wood, which is the best in the world—far better than that of Switzerland.

I asked what were her impressions as to Hungary.

Madame Mohl. That the people are good, but that they are oppressed by a contemptible aristocracy. From the time that the Hungarians committed the folly of electing as their constitutional king the sovereign of countries more powerful in the aggregate than Hungary is, they felt their constitution to be in danger, and tried to retain it by refusing to allow any change whatever. They thought that, if they permitted any part to be touched, all would come down, so that 1848 found the present generation in the feudal state of the Middle Ages—a subservient peasantry, tyrannized over by a high-spirited, gentlemanlike, ignorant, oppressive, and dissolute nobility.

We lived with my nephew-in-law, who is a judge and *sous-préfet* in the district of Koloska, which contains the estates of the Archbishop of Koloska. Though the see has possessed them for years, it has done nothing for them; there are no roads, no schools, no drainage, no embankment against the floods. None of the duties of property have been performed, while all its rights have been fully exercised. A fine soil, a fine climate, and a fine people, all misused and neglected.

We went from time to time to balls given by the nobles. The company consisted of nobles, that is by birth, but in fact men

working for their bread—lawyers, notaries, medical men, and government *employés*. It was the society of a country town, but I never saw such grace of manner, not even in Paris. As they talked only Hungarian I could not follow them, but I fancy that I lost nothing, that their conversation was as empty, silly, and low-minded as their manners were good.

Sometimes people visited us who talked French. Once the Rhine was mentioned; somebody asked, "What is the Rhine?" "Oh," said the most intelligent man present, "it is a river somewhere in Germany."

One young lady after her first visit told us all her history. How she was in love with a young man, how he was very handsome, how he was a Protestant, how the archbishop's doctor out of jealousy told it at the palace, and how the archbishop told her father and her uncle that if she married a Protestant they would be turned out of office. "So," she said, "I was forced to give him up, which was a great shame; but the doctor shall get nothing by it. I won't marry *him;* he does not come up to my chin."

Another lady, also on her first visit, told us that her husband had a mistress, and that she was advised to divorce him, but that there would be great trouble in dividing all the furniture and sheets and towels.

A German *employé* said to me, "I like the Hungarians; they are so good-natured and agreeable." "Are they honest?" "Oh no," he answered; "they do not know what honesty means." "Are they just?" "Oh no; they do not know what justice means. But they are so patriotic. We Germans have nothing like their patriotism." "It shows itself," I said, "I suppose, in caring for the welfare of their people." "Not in the least," he answered. "It shows itself in wearing the Hungarian dress, in talking the Hungarian language, and in lamenting the loss of their privileges; above all, that of immunity from taxation." He showed me an order he had just received from Vienna. It was to inquire whether it were true that boys were flying kites painted black and gold, in which case the kites were to be confiscated and the boys punished.

In short, to visit Hungary is to walk into the fourteenth century. It is more like Spain than any other European country. In grace, and in utter absence of education, the ladies put me in mind of the Spanish women.

Senior. What is the character of the priests?

Madame Mohl. In the Koloska district, which is Catholic, very bad; they almost all have children by their housekeepers. The peasants, as far as I could hear, are loyal to Austria. The emperor and the imperial bureaucracy are their shield against the feudal tyranny of the landlords.

Senior. What did you find the feeling in Vienna respecting the emperor?

Madame Mohl. I had no good means of information. We had letters for many of the best people; but we found Mr. Mohl had been denounced as an emissary of Louis Napoleon with a revolutionary mission; we were afraid of compromising our acquaintances, and did not deliver them.

I had heard that she was writing a book, and asked about it.

Madame Mohl. Its peg will be Madame Récamier, its substance will be a comparison of French and English manners. I shall be forced, however, to suppress much for fear of offending relations.

Senior. What is the story of Madame de Staël's *liaison* with Augustus Schlegel?

Madame Mohl. It was not a *liaison;* for a *liaison* there must be two parties. He was in love with her, but she was not in love with him. Schlegel lived with her as her son's tutor. He rather *affichéed* his admiration for the mother as an excuse for performing such an office for the son. Barante was also very much in love with her. Once when he was leaving the house she wished for a parting interview; but Schlegel was always in the way, so she begged Madame Récamier to take possession of Schlegel for a couple of hours. When the parting was over, Madame Récamier asked Madame de Staël how it had gone off. "A ravir," said Madame de Staël, "nous étions tous les deux au désespoir."



VIEW FROM THE WINDOW OF THE LARGER SALON

CHAPTER VIII.

1860–61.

Refinement introduced by the *précieuses* of the Hôtel Rambouillet—Madame de Maintenon—Sympathy necessary to a writer—A new generation of *habitués* in the Rue du Bac—Loménie—Montalembert—New review—Hungarians and Poles—Decrees of Louis Napoleon—Abolition of passports—Causes of so many rascals flocking to London—Reception of Lacordaire at the Academy—Over-activity in England—Austro-Prussian War—China—Education of nieces—Young ladies in England—Ristori—Lamartine a *tirelire*—Papal affairs—Madame Tastu—Heroism of the Americans—Slavery—The trireme—Demolition of old Paris—Madame Mohl correcting her proofs—Frystone—Grandmother's picture—The Abbé Châteauvieux and "Mémoires de St. Hélène"—Mexican affair.

DURING the winter Madame Mohl was absorbed in composing her book. She writes to Miss Bonham Carter—

October 14, 1860.

DEAREST COZ,

I wish I could consult Flo about my book. This is the query. It enters into my plan to show the two centuries in French history when the women had the most influence; viz. the twelfth, when chivalry began, and all at once they were sung and obeyed; and the seventeenth, when the *précieuses* remoralized France to a *certain degree*—at least, they were the first to bring decency into books and conversation. The influence lasted the whole of the century; it ended, one may say, with Madame de Maintenon. Now, I have my own views on this lady very different from the ordinary ones—though now people have begun to do her some justice—and I am much tempted to enter into many particulars of her life and letters to show her character, and how much better she was than others, and that her influence was precisely a proof of what I say as to the love of the society and the conversation of women being a taste

peculiar to the French, which nothing can better prove than an all-powerful monarch marrying a woman of forty-eight, three years older than himself, when all the young beauties were at his beck and call. I must not have a critic that is too severe, as they discourage me, and I throw it aside and can't work; it is a thing not sufficiently considered, that animal spirits are the first ingredient for doing anything. Criticism entirely stops the current, at least with me. I'm convinced that is the reason why art is so brilliant at its birth. There are no critics. The artist goes on helter-skelter, enjoying his creations. The more sympathy he obtains, the quicker his ideas flow; but if he stops one minute to think of all the faults and all the indifference, he is iced, and he really can't help it. But it is twelve o'clock, and I must go to bed.

Some younger men than the old *habitués*, such as Renan, Prévost-Paradol, Lanfrey, and Loménie, now frequented Madame Mohl's *salon*. Foremost of all at this time was Loménie, professor of literature in the Collége de France, and afterwards at the École Polytechnique. He was a staunch Orleanist, and would accept no appointment under the emperor. His conversation was as full of grace and vivacity as his writings. The affection between him and Madame Mohl was mutual, and I cannot believe that he expressed himself as being ashamed of appearing with her in public, as has been stated. He cannot defend himself from this charge of disloyalty to his old friend, for he died in 1878.

Paris, November 12, 1860.

DEAR MINNIE,

My thoughts are just like jelly-fish; they come out in a messy, disgusting, pulpy state, and when I want to lick them into shape and put bone into them by words, I turn sick at the sight of them, and waste paper enough, if spread out, to reach to China.

M. de Loménie was here yesterday. He has just *accouché* of the new review. It is called *Revue Nationale et Etrangère*; it is to rival Buloz, of the *Deux Mondes*. He sent me the review in the morning; luckily, it was already cut. He took it up and read me all the

best morsels, giving proper emphasis, and saying, "N'est-ce pas ça n'est pas mal?" "Voilà qui est bien tapé!" "Qu'en dites vous?" These were interlarded; and then he would say, "Now, if anybody says to you I have gone over to the Government, I think this bit" (then he read a piece). "Mind you tell them so. I wonder what Buloz will say to this?" Then he read another bit. Nobody ever enjoyed their own writing so much before; his *amour-propre* is so *bon enfant.* He used to write for the *Deux Mondes*, and they made him correct his articles. He did it once; he did it twice. At last he grew outrageous, and told me to say to Buloz he must call upon him if he wanted anything more; but I never saw Buloz, and I'm sorry I did not write and tell him to come to me, for Loménie got out of humour, and a bookseller, called Charpentier, just seized on him in the moment fit for temptation, as old Nick does, and persuaded him to be the leading manager of a new review, and now he has entered Pandemonium I feel remorse. He'll never stay in it. His temper is very peppery, not to say bad. He is very honest and kind-hearted; both his good and bad qualities will make it a *métier de galère.* You English can have no idea of the difficulty of writing against a Government without giving a word that can be a handle. It was this *adresse* that he was so delighted with in his article—it's very clever—"Les Principes de 1789." There's a German proverb, "Wash your muff, but don't wet it," which must be put into practice by all the Opposition. Montalembert has written a letter to Cavour, which perhaps you have seen; it is salted and peppered to the highest. He wrote to me, and said he longed for Lord John Russell to give him an opportunity to do the same for him.

I wish I had been with you at Bowood; it must have been very entertaining. If your papa can't give me another copy of the Report,* I shall get back the one I left with my sister. It's invaluable, and my niece in Hungary writes to me that she has read it with the greatest interest and admiration. Mr. Mohl is most particularly interested in all he writes on education. I will tell Loménie your good opinion. It's like watering a thirsty plant to give him a compliment. What a charming passion vanity is!—I don't mean sour, saturnine vanity.

Our Barthélemy is staunch as ever. He says that L. N. divides the money with Haussmann that he makes by pulling down Paris, and

* Report of the Education Commission.

that it is enormous. Some say Madame Eugénie is quite cured since she has been in England. She was so tired of all the etiquette he imposed upon her, and she feels now as free as when she was a girl, and goes about London shopping, on which a wise gentleman who has been *one week* in London said the etiquette in England was a pretty deal worse than here. The Hungarians are all in strong reaction. They are going to name along with Count Karoly one who has been ten years in prison. I am convinced they will go to loggerheads, because the Kossuth party will divide from the nobles, who will try to get all the power they can; and as honesty and truth are unknown articles in their country, it will scarcely end well. They are like the Poles, and will be taken by some one. Ivan Tourguénieff is here; he is very delightful. I suppose you are very busy. Pray squeeze in a little time for me. This is a dull letter, and a poor return for yours, which made me laugh so.

DEAREST MINNIE,

So far from thinking you behaved brutally (what a word! I didn't invent it), I think you very kind to write to the likes of me when you are translating such grand books. I knew Gustave de Beaumont years ago, and thought him not very profound. Mr. Mohl said he and Tocqueville were body and shadow, but Tocqueville was the body. Is it true, and is it seen in the writing? I have seen no Wyses; write me by return of post only one word with their address, that I may call on them and make a party for them. I'm in love with them both.

I much envy your Christmas party—Monckton Milnes, etc. I have spent a week in the country with him. Nothing can be so droll as he is when quite easy and *en verve*. I have finished one morsel of my book on "Chivalry." I am afraid it will give a very bad opinion of me. It is very immoral, because I say that love was *then* incompatible with marriage. Don't tell anybody. I wrote to my friend Hutton, who spoke to Chapman and Hall; but the despicable wretches *will* see it first. Sometimes I think it abominable, fanciful stuff, and then I think it's very good. I have lent it to a friend, and am quite quaking to hear what she says, and yet I'm such a goose that I put off sending for it because I know if she thinks it stuff I shall not have the power to write another line. It takes away one's animal spirits—did you never find that? I do nothing without my

animal spirits. I can't get off my chair when I am bereaved of them, and I can't understand how some people live on in a sort of routine without seeming to like or dislike living. Loménie was here last night, like a bottle of champagne whizzing all over the room. He is really a jewel, though insufferable sometimes; he is so violent when opposed. He has given up the review in a huff, because the editors and writers were anti-papal and vulgar-minded, and had many other qualities. I'm extremely glad, as he was unfit for it. I shall write to Mrs. Clive about her book. I shall like to see "why Paul Ferroll killed his wife," though I must say I know so many who have capital reasons for so doing that it will be easy enough to explain. We are intensely dull here. All my intimates have some one ill or dying, and I don't know where to go for a little amusement. Poor Madame de Circourt's is the most cheerful and pleasant house I know, and though she's so suffering no one would know it.

Some people here are silly enough to take these new decrees of Louis Napoleon in earnest. There's a certain law by which any one who has ever been condemned to the least political penalty, or fined by the police, is liable to be sent to Cayenne at any time by the minister without judge or jury. It was made after the Orsini terror, and if any *mal-avisé* was to say anything now, or get the least in disgrace with the police, all political rights of defence are lost for ever. This keeps them very cautious. Some say these decrees are to make Europe believe he is such friends with the nation that he can conduct an army on the Rhine whenever he likes. No one doubts war in the spring. An officer who is quartered near Nancy tells me that they all feel convinced of it; nay, the army would be sorry if they didn't. He is putting everything in preparation; horses by thousands are out at grass all ready; more troops are adding; certain immense clothing establishments are overdone with work. The Emperor of Austria said that many faults had been committed; that he himself had committed many; Rechberg's brother told this; and, as Schmerling has become minister, the system will change. But is it too late? If the Germans won't join all heart in hand, as in 1814, they will have a repetition of 1805–10. The Sardinians send quantities of arms to Hungary and Wallachia. This man has emissaries in both to work up and influence. Meantime L. N. puts an end to passports between England and France, to become popular there,

and though nothing could be a greater farce than these have been for years, and the French Government only gets rid of a plague, the English are silly enough to be quite charmed with this dust thrown in their eyes. As L. N., when a conspirator, travelled about where he pleased in spite of passports, no one knows better what nonsense they are; but in getting rid of them he gives himself a friendly air, while he is planning mischief and making us spend our vitals after we have helped him to attain this position by our alliance. Oh, we are a nice set! and I sometimes think we richly deserve to have a trial of French pillaging on our land. We had no business in China; but our taking the French brigands was monstrous—rattlesnakes are nothing to it. But good night; I shan't sleep if I think of it. Love to all.

A few days later she wrote—

As to the passport affair, it is to humbug you foolish English—a sugar-plum. He is increasing his navy enormously, making railroads from this to Brest. Pray put it into your head that this gentleman delights in nothing but underhand conspiracies. If the English persist in being blind, they will rue it. I wrote to Lady William and saturated her, I fear, with politics. If you see her, tell her I pine for a letter. Nothing can be more secluded than we all live here; the streets are impassable both to horse and foot. If I go out at night I must walk, and I did on Christmas night to the Tourguénieffs' and back; no coach would or could go. I never saw Paris so before.

Barthélemy keeps me *au courant* of the tricks of the Tuileries. People are mad for tickets at the Institut; it's nine months since I was asked for mine. It will not be till after January 31, Guizot being for ever pruning his discourse. Lacordaire's is ready.

Love to all your people.

Paris, January 13, 1861.

DEAR HILLY,

Rendu has published a second edition of his book about the education of the lower classes in England. He wants to send it to the *Westminster* to get it mentioned, I dare say with praise; but that I care nothing about. I wish you could tell whoever writes on

the subject to say that nothing can be more impudent and unjust than the mania foreigners have of comparing the misery of London to the misery of other capitals. It is like comparing the dirt of a cesspool in one house to the cistern of clear water in the next, and concluding that the inhabitants of the first are very dirty and of the next very clean. One knows that all the *canaille* of all the world may go to London, and that for our own subjects we have no passports, no gates, no books at the Police, to inscribe every one who takes a bed in every house. Here passports have been refused all over the provinces, even to workmen, for the last four years, unless they had great recommendations, etc.; and as nobody can circulate in the whole country without leave, nor ever could, and all vagabonds are immediately sent back to their *depôts de mendicité* in their departments, it's easy enough to keep it clean. In Vienna it is even more difficult to make a sink of the metropolis, as a sort of imaginary cordon is drawn at a good number of leagues round the town, and unless the passport permits it no one can pass this; and they must generally give an account of their means of existence to obtain permission, on the passport, to pass the said frontier into the capital. These facts I know, and I dare say the other large towns have something of the sort. I told Rendu, who smiled as usual, and paid little attention. His book has good in it, and after all, those who point out our failings are much more useful than our flatterers.

To Miss E. Haughton.

January, 1861.

MY DEAR ELIZA,

I was at the reception of Lacordaire yesterday. Of all the crowds and absurd anxiety to get in I ever saw, it was the worst. I was almost killed and my clothes all spoilt, though I had a *billet de centre*. Railroads brought people from Toulouse and Belgium, as if there was room enough. They say two hundred false tickets were forged and sold at Brussels; but they stamped the genuine ones at the Institut, so the others could not pass. This is what I'm told. The ladies, as usual, fought like tigers. Villemain, they say, had six hundred letters a day for the last week. At least one-half of those who had centre tickets could find no place. It was no great thing after all. I applauded at all the political allusions, I always go on purpose, and I assure you they were not spared. Every

time the word liberty was used—clap! clap! Eugénie was up at one tribune, Mathilde at another, Plon-Plon at another. One-third of the numbers could not sit down. Two women coolly kept their seat amongst them. There's a new play called the "Effrontés," and I vote for sending them tickets to it *de la part* of the unseated members.

With kindest love, I remain affectionately yours,

MARY MOHL.

To Miss Bonham Carter.

February, 1861.

England is one vast volcano of over-exertion and worrit; they can't be quiet. Their brains are worn out; then they must have an artificial energy to make them believe they are strong. But it eats into the life; it spends the capital. We all have a little income of strength, and won't be content with it. It may be so far good that some people are so unreasonable they *won't* be quiet and do nothing, but they *must* fidget and bother after other people's business; they have lost all taste for intellectual quiet enjoyment from this dreadful habit of fidget.

I went to the reception of Lacordaire. Lacordaire's speech was good as a composition—crammed with nonsense about the Americans. Every time the word "liberty" was mentioned the rounds of applause were absolutely comical, for up in one window was Eugénie, in another Mathilde, in another Plon-Plon; so they saw a public little seen in their circles. L. N. told M. de Sarcey (of the *Débats*) that he was entirely against the unity of Italy and the invasion of Naples. The young King of Naples is a great favourite here. How the English can warrant to themselves their enthusiasm about liberty and go tyrannizing over the Chinese, I can't conceive; but I think they are more nonsensical than anybody—and no wonder, when Cobden, Gladstone, and Bright rule the roast. Oh, the things that go on in Hungary—the rascalities!—it would fill a book; and if my book succeeds, and I get a name, I will go there and write such a one as will show what we English admire with a vengeance.

March, 1861.

I am in awful spirits at our base conduct; we shall stand by and see Austria beat, and a year or two hence he will attack Prussia,

and then we shall begin to understand. If we and Prussia had behaved properly, this injustice would not have taken place. The absurdity, the baseness, of Lord John Russell's intrigue to undo a ministry at such a time has given me the measure of the Whigs. I had an idea of it, but I could not have supposed it possible, I was fool enough to suppose there was some honesty in England; but they are such fools—so blind I cannot understand them. This fellow "joué'd" them at the Russian peace; they spent their best blood and money in the Crimean War. He then always put himself forward; now he "joués" them by pretending this is all for the love of liberty in Italy. He will say anything; they will believe anything in words, they never look at deeds. I don't know how I shall bear being in England after such conduct. I saw Lord Elgin last night; he was delightful. He talked of China and Japan for two hours. He's so natural, so just, so humane, so sensible, it's a comfort that such a man should be in power; but will he, in the absurd way in which everything goes on? Perhaps they'll make some fool Governor-General or Minister. He was in perpetual fight with the English at Canton, to protect the natives against them. We can have no idea how they are put upon by the scampy English who go there.

April 10, 1861.

DEAREST LADY WILLIAM,

I have been so absorbed these last five months with writing a sort of a sketch of past French society to add to Madame Récamier's life, that I seem to have been in a dream all the winter. As soon as a bookseller deigns to publish I shall send you a copy, hoping for your indulgence. There is no suffrage I should be so ambitious of gaining, and I hope your kindness to the author will soften and even warp your judgment of the book. We have, of course, been all absorbed in politics as usual, and the last seven weeks I had two English nieces to preach and *morigéner*—"Hold up your head; answer in a soft voice; don't look crusty; don't see-saw when you walk." Then I stick myself before the glass, walk up and down as stiff as a poker, make one of them do the same after me, looking in the glass. All morality I eschew; like Lord Chesterfield, I think of nothing but deportment. Can you, who are a philosopher, explain why the *tournure* and manners of so many English of good

connections, liberal education, etc., etc., are so bad compared to those of the same rank on the Continent? Is it shyness, or pride, or the mania for cooping up the girls in schoolrooms, like wild beasts in a cage, till they are pulled out to be looked at by the public? I think that explains it enough for the women; the *gêne* they feel never seems to leave them, unless they turn pert and flirty —and that is worse—and what I hear called *fast*. Oh! *that* I detest worse than all, and it is just as far from ease and simplicity as the former.

I saw the Ristori last night in a French play; it's extraordinary how little accent she has, and how fine her ear must be, for when I first knew her, six years ago, she spoke very middling French, with a very strong Italian accent. The play made on purpose for her is extremely bad, her acting is overdone. They say here it is Italian; I say, "No." When she first came over here she was far less exaggerated, in fact in "Myrrha" she was perfect. It is the French that have spoiled her by applauding when she makes her face express every slight detail of the words she speaks. She was led to this by acting in a language not half understood, and she ekes out her meaning by so much pantomime that it is fatiguing to look at her. Grammar is not to be attained by human muscles. It is like Wagner, who wants to make music—what it would lose its nature if he succeeded—a sort of thinking and reasoning art.

I wonder if you retain enough of French localities to know what a *tirelire* is? It is a common earthen pot entirely closed, with a slit at the top; the poor people all have one, in which they slip in an odd penny—especially the children, who go about begging of their friends to put something through the slit. At the end of a year or two they break it, and have generally a large quantity of sous. It was for years the custom to hand about a *tirelire* in the omnibus on New Year's Day to collect *étrennes* for the conductor. A *tirelire*, in fact, is a very old institution, quite in the manners and habits of the country; you give money without any one knowing how much, and there is no humiliation for the small contributor or the receiver. Some one said the other day, "Ce pauvre Lamartine, ce n'est plus une Lyre c'est une tirelire." To me it is delightful.

The papal affair has done no end of good; many people who were cowardly are become courageous, and were you not astonished at sixty senators voting against the Government, who named them

purposely to be their creatures? But I know of one who said to another, "I did not much care about the papal affair, but I should have had no peace at home if I had voted against the pope." Is it not odd that the English, who pretend to be so religious, abuse the French for voting for their own religious creed against this despotic Government? Suppose the French abused the seven bishops who voted against James II. and preferred the risk, what would they say? Can't they suppose the French Catholics must stick to the pope or they are no Catholics? and if they are not the English call them infidels. Oh, justice! As to liberty, it's a vain hypocritical word like "doxy." Liberty is for me to do as I please, and for you to submit. The word will be ridiculous in another thirty years, unless those who cry it will define what it means.

Pray, dearest madame, do tell me how you are. My spouse *se met à vos pieds;* and pray don't forget him there, but raise him up with good news, and believe me

Ever yours,

M. MOHL.

The following letter is the first to her great-niece, Miss Eleanor Martin :—

May 23, 1861.

I go almost every day to read aloud to Madame Tastu, who has been couched, and recovered only one eye, if recovered it may be called. She can see to go about, and recognizes her friends close to her, but as yet she can't read; however, they promise that she will. Her son came from Belgrade, where he is consul, with a three months' leave of absence. It is beautiful to see him, he is so fond of her; he never went out once of an evening for two months, though he is passionately fond of music.

Mrs. Green is going to America. Her husband went last week to go and fight the South, and on Thursday night he said, "Anna, I can't stay away; I must go." "Very well, William; I'll go to Caen to-morrow morning" (they have a country house there) "and sell the furniture, get rid of the lease, and follow you in a fortnight." On Friday she was at Caen; the furniture was placarded; on Saturday she came back. She came to see me on Sunday; he was to leave on Wednesday. Her sister has sent her two sons, her brother his only son. It's the grandest thing I ever saw. I would go to America

if I were twenty years younger. I never wished to go before—I hated it; I now have the highest respect for it. The slaves will be all free before twenty years are over. Oh! if your dear mamma had seen it, how glad she would have been! . . .

The trireme won't budge, and our rascal had catapults made to imitate the ancient ones; but nothing can persuade the trireme to swim, or the catapults to throw a stone; so all this show-off is for nothing (what ducks they are not to mind him!). I went to the exhibition, but was so tired I saw nothing, and went to bed when I got home.

The emperor was at this time full of his "Life of Cæsar," on which he relied for admission into the Academy. The trireme referred to was made by his order, in imitation of the Roman galleys; it proved a failure.

May 31, 1861.

MY DEAR MINNIE,

The wretch of a publisher, having kept my MS. I don't know how long, says it can't be published before October. Now, I had just as soon put it in the fire; I may be dead by that time. He talks some stuff about the season, forsooth—as if books were fish and could only be ate at one time! Now, if there was anything I cared about it was promptitude; if any one promised me anything —Paradise itself—next year, I wouldn't thank them. I hate next year.

June 2, 1861.

DEAR MRS. GASKELL,

I'm sure I forget if I have behaved like a pig in not answering the kindest of invitations. I am so accustomed to such behaviour in myself, that whoever likes may make me believe I have, even when I'm as innocent as a lamb, for I have grown not to know right from wrong from sheer incapacity to recollect. If I have, pray forgive me, and if I say I'll never do so again, don't trust to it; it is my intention, that's all. I will just say a few words about facts, having made my act of confession and contrition. I'm going to England about the 10th, always at the last moment doubting whether I had not better stay at home. I believe there have been several kingdoms overthrown since I wrote last. I want to hear of

your book. Some one told me you had been ill; do let me hear about you. Paris is all coming down; there won't be an old hotel six years hence. The Isle Notre Dame is to have nothing but barracks on it; it breaks my heart. This fellow is jealous of all the long history. Six thousand people are turned out of house and home. You English make me sick; you say why do you bear it? You helped him at first, and he has six hundred thousand soldiers, but you are paying for it; yet, such is your folly, you like him better than L. Philippe, though L. P. kept the peace. It will appear so strange in history that it will not be believed; but folly always has that effect at a distance. One says it is impossible that people could be such fools.

20, York Terrace, June 13, 1861.

DEAR MINNIE,

I am quite easy about my book, for I see it would not be read now—my *chef-d'œuvre*. *Ah!*—so it's to come out in October. Messrs. Hutton and Bagehot have managed very well for me, and I'm much obliged to them. And, my dear Minnie, I shall be living near you in a fortnight, perhaps before; for my beloved Hilary Carter has a dwelling there, and what is hers is mine and mine is hers, except her time, which she grudges me, she says. I dine to-day at Mrs. Hollond's with Messrs. Rémusat and Buckle. The latter I'm very curious about.

Love to the senior Seniors, not forgetting the pretty junior.

This was a delightful season, for Madame Mohl's lodging was in the Gloucester Road, within a stone's throw of Hyde Park Gate. It was our habit to breakfast at 10.30 or 11. My father often invited two or three interesting people. The party was small, and general conversation was achieved. I never heard such interesting conversations as at those breakfasts; and Madame Mohl used to drop in continually, as well as to tea and dinner.

Frystone, August 27, 1861.

DEAR MRS. GASKELL,

I thought it better not to bother Miss Tollet with a letter, but to write when I had a little time, to say how glad I should have been to have seen you somehow or other; but I am too

poorly to visit just now. I had a beginning of my old complaint in London, and was in a fright; then I got a little better, and when I got here felt remarkably well the first two days, but have been very poorly the last three.

Pray tell me if you are getting on with your story. I corrected my proofs in London with the utmost trouble, as I liked my bad English better than Mr. Greg's good. Now mind, he has been very kind and useful, but one's ideas never can be expressed exactly by another. Oh, the trouble I have taken! I remained exactly a month longer in London to correct these proofs. I know you won't like it, but I had great pleasure in writing a part of it, I must say. I remained exactly two months in London. The first I enjoyed and went out a good deal; the second, I had the toothache and the proofs. I was sick and tired of the whole business. Mr. Mohl came on the 16th, very tired of Paris, and so pleased at being in London that he sniffed at the smoke as if it had been a smelling-bottle. I stay here till Thursday to see Arthur Russell.

Cold Overton, September 29, 1861.

DEAR MINNIE,

I have been so ill that I did not write, because I was disheartened and did not think it worth while to give tongue to such a contemptible state of mind. Howling is disagreeable, and I really had no other note. I have been better these last three days, enough to make me hope I have turned the corner. I was very sorry to find your papa had fallen into the same *disgrazia*. Mr. Mohl saw him in London, and says he was better. I am sadly afraid all my pleasant visits must be given up; I am certainly a little better than a fortnight ago; but even supposing I should improve much quicker, I should certainly not be fit for company. I am in bed half the day, lolling about the other half, I go on my pony two hours, and have about two or three hours a day of spirits and talk on condition I have the utmost indulgence. Is that a fit state for being in other people's houses? I can't express how disappointed I am, for I enjoyed my visit so entirely at Monckton Milnes' that it gave me an inordinate appetite for more. I met there a lady who knows you—Miss Ellen Tollet. I happened to tell a story you told me of an old woman who had a *carbunion* in her back, etc.; and when she saw I took an interest in the discourses heard in these byways of society, she read

me bits of a certain journal kept by her sister, who has a "Senior" memory, but not about the converse of great stars, but of country people. I never heard anything more racy, more full of life and reality. She is a very intellectual and uncommon person; I intend to go and see her. We had many agreeable men, Holman Hunt among others, whom I like so well that I comprehend people should put up with his unpunctualities. I stayed there ten days, and spent my last pennyworth of strength. I came here to fall down, I may say, like the exhausted warrior who has only breath to announce the victory and drops down dead. Is there such a one, or do I dream it? My memory is so bad that I often invent quotations, and am ready to die for their exactness. But I must not go falling down at Mrs. Clive's. I hate sick people, and myself more than any. I respect cats, when they are ill they hide themselves and die unseen; indeed, all animals have that modesty. Mr. Milnes was delightful. He was the model of a master of a house—thinking of everybody; and then his incomparable drollery would come out in spite of himself. A lady asked "who was the bishop's wife?"—so like a country cousin's question. He replied with the utmost gravity, "She is the daughter of the King of the Cannibal Islands." He was for ever breaking out in such rich explosions.

Paris, November 12, 1861.

I have only been able to read the last week, and writing was almost impossible. Mr. Senior saw what a poor creature I was, and when I got here I was within an ace of my life. When I was at Cold Overton I thought I was going to die, so I promised a picture to my nephew which I do nothing but fret after now. Catch me disposing of my goods before I'm dead another time! But these two nieces are great darlings, and I bribed their father with my grandmother's picture to let them come with me. Now they say he would any day sell any of his children for a picture of any great-grandmother; but he would not let me take them to the opera (where I could not go, by-the-by), so I'll never give him another (I have plenty more), and if he had consented he would have had them all. But unless I wrote a book I could never make you understand the absurd family I belong to. When I'm in a rage I think of showing them all up, and I would not give a pin for their chance if I get into high spirits (I was ready to caper a day or two ago), and then woe

betide them; but I am now very quiet, and mistress of some judgment. I do assure you your book * is wonderfully done. I rejoice that I never read it in French; it came, therefore, quite fresh. I never miss the French when I read it, and that I reckon wonderful; and if you mistrust my friendship, Mr. Mohl says it is very well done indeed, and we both told Ampère so, who fancies you are too fine a lady to translate. He dines with us to-night. I invited the Reeves, and I have Mignet, Barthélemy St. Hilaire, Loménie, General Fox, and perhaps Ivan Tourguénieff—the most uncertain of men. Your book contains so much more than the French; that alone would make it very valuable. Oh, by-the-by, there's a slight mistake from your papa's journal; he makes Tocqueville say that the memorial of St. Helena was by an *Abbé* de Châteauvieux. He was not an abbé, but a fine gentleman who had a wife; he was an old friend of Madame de Staël, and belonged to her society. It is true that he did not live in Paris, but, I believe, near Geneva. The memorial appeared towards 1817–18, or 1819; it made a great noise, being very witty, and was attributed to all the cleverest people. My mother, who doted on politics, wanted me to read all the *brochures* that appeared, and offered me five francs to read that. I hated politics in those days, but I had very little money, and five francs was a serious gain. In 1831 or 1832, when we were at the Abbaye-au-Bois, Madame Récamier often came into our *salon* in the evening; she was there when her servant came to tell her M. de Châteauvieux was inquiring for her, and he was requested to come to find her in our *salon*. He was a very complete converser and *homme de société*, and after he was gone it was related how delighted he had been to take in every one with the famous memorial.

I can't find out why my book does not come out; I am quite tired of waiting for it. I have a great mind to think no more about it, but to write a book to show up the evangelicals; then I shall get hooted at properly.

December 3, 1861.

DEAR MRS. GROTE,

You are a better woman than you think, for you sent me your book, and I am a worse; for though I was very grateful, I never found a moment to write, and now I ought to be doing some-

* A translation of the "Memoirs and Remains of Tocqueville" (Macmillan, 1861).

thing else instead. I had not all the articles in the book, though I had several.* A thousand thanks now, as also for your amusing letter. I had a visit of eighteen days from Lady Augusta Bruce; she is very agreeable and very good; I enjoyed her visit. I have now two musical nieces who play on the piano. My spouse hates music, and is heroic enough to say so, which, I think, puts him on a par with Hannibal or any of the great ancients; but as I have a particular fancy for that Carthaginian, I show it by comparing him to my spouse. I love his unquellable hatred of the Romans; I always hated them too. Our scamp has done a nice thing. I enjoy the Mexican affair; it is L. N.'s Moscow. I hope he'll send more and more men; serve them right. Perish armies if their death shows a principle, and the glorious principle of not falling like brigands on people at the other side of the globe! I hope some day the Chinese will cut all our throats over there; I should wish it if my own brother was one of them. The only history I read with gluttony is Boney's return from Russia; it is almost the only one where Justice, a tedious old dawdle, seems ground young and brisk. But I have no notion of two weights and two scales, of thinking right or wrong according to my partialities; only one must see all the bearings of the case, and that is difficult. Even Scamp's partisans are embarrassed with the Mexican affair.

I envy you the acquaintance of John Stuart Mill. I wish you would use all your powers to persuade him to come and see me when he comes through Paris; he is a man who thinks for himself; "he *is* a man for a' that." They are scarce enough, and whether one always agrees with them or not, they are of the real stuff one loves to see, and have a charm for me which the madcaps you talk of, who are only trying to glare and flare one's eyes out, have not; for they pretend to what the first have in reality. I have kept the secret of our expedition to Holland House most sacredly. General Fox was here and talked of it—not a word. I have so often been the confidant of political affairs, that I have the habit of never mentioning to one conspirator what another has said to me, though they both know that I know it; because, if we were in a court of justice and privately questioned, nothing could come of what I had said. I learnt this at sixteen years old.—Yours ever,

MARY MOHL.

* Mrs. Grote's collected papers.

CHAPTER IX.

1862–63.

Position of women in England—In Greece—Country squires despise women—Mothers sneered at—Selfishness of fathers—Improvement due to French chivalry—Decline of the empire—Letter to Princess Batthyany with her book—Exhibition of 1862—Archbishop Whately's story—Visit to the Circourts—Friendship in France—Women in France and England—Young Italians—Arconati—Sanson's lesson at the Conservatoire—Montalembert's daughter takes the veil—His distress—Sale of stamps in the Tuileries—Dean Stanley's marriage—Norma for young ladies—Progress in France just before the Revolution.

THE following letter is in answer to one from me protesting against her unfavourable view of the position of women in England :—

January 2, 1862 (alas! one's always getting older).

DEAREST MINNIE,

I was contemplating a letter to you when yours came.

I ought to have put in my preface that the manners of the present day and in the rising generation are perfectly left out by me, both in France and England. I deal only with the past. In fact, there's no manners at all now; one can't talk of the non-existent—but that you will deny too; but I don't think *you* are a judge; you see a fraction of the most cultivated literary society, and you are young and good-looking. It puts me in mind of the fermier-général in 1778, when all Paris was talking of bettering the state of the peasants, of a liberal government, of the rights of man, etc. The fermier-général, who was enormously rich, said, "Mais pourquoi donc changer? nous sommes si bien." I don't deny that women are well off in tolerably civilized places when they are young and pretty and clever, but I want to know how that was brought about. Do you suppose the Greek ladies had the best places, or could say

their soul was their own? When Orestes killed his mother the others said that, women being far inferior, he was not to be judged as if it were a man; the idea was an ordinary one, or they would not have proclaimed it. It is to the eleventh century that you owe your position; but I, who lived in the country in my youth among very well-bred, old-fashioned, and broad-landed country squires, have seen over and over what I say. The men talk together; the lady of the house may be addressed once in a way as a duty, but they had all rather talk together, and she is pretty mute if there is no other lady. I see it is the same now; they have no notion that a lady's conversation is better than a man's. The widower of a friend of mine, a clergyman, was quite astonished when Mr. Mohl said English women had more cultivation than the men, and you could talk to them on more subjects; he was so bothered that when he got alone with Mr. Mohl he returned to the subject, and could not believe he was serious. His wife gave out more sense in a quarter of an hour than he in a year. He did not invent this; it's the common opinion. My friend —— will have £12,000 a year, his sisters will have £200, and they won't have a sou of this, unless they marry, till he dies. Another friend of mine married at twenty a woman ten years older than himself. He was a widower at three and thirty, and he took special care to hunt after a wife as fast as he could. He won't let his daughters go out because he hates going out; his son may do anything he pleases, yet he is younger than the eldest. These poor girls are handsome. I don't say it's essential for girls to marry, but they ought to have the choice. No, they are women—why should they be independent? And haven't I seen boys behave impertinently to their mothers, who submit; and hasn't Lady William told me what court a mamma will pay to her eldest son to get him to *doter* his sister? Ah, Minnie, you are like the fermier-général. And what don't I see in all the novels about mammas trying to fish up husbands for their daughters, and the contempt thrown on all these women? Poor souls! if I had a daughter whose brother was to have £10,000 a year and she £200, I should fish too. Poor thing! she is brought up in a fine house to be turned out, or dependent upon a pert sister-in-law, and her father spends more every year on his dog-kennels than he will give to her; and if the poor anxious mother had brought her daughters up to make their own clothes and to dress shabbily, the papa would have been mortified. They are his

playthings; but as to thinking of their future well-being, he never does. You always see the mamma sneered at because she wants to marry them well; the papa is never troubled about anything but himself, therefore he is not ridiculous. He thinks they are to make his tea and to nurse him when he is old and gouty, and that is what they were born for. As I have no daughters, and have married my adopted one to my entire satisfaction, I am in a good position to speak out; it will absolutely please me to be a little abused, because I shall be delighted to answer. I had a lawsuit in England and one in France. I lost the former because I was never allowed to speak to my lawyer; it bored him, forsooth. I gained £2500 in the latter. I went to Limoges, took a lawyer with me and followed it up. He talked it over with me. He was one of the first lawyers here. I have done justice to the good feelings of the men in England when they like a lady; but as a sex they think women inferior—they have no money, they are to obey their husbands. Of course there are exceptions; but public opinion puts them in a very different position here, and especially it never comes into any one's head that women are born to nurse and look after the men-folk. What little women possess of independence all over Europe is due to the French of the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

I have letters from Hilly telling me she is so occupied with Flo she can scarcely write. She was to come and see me in December, but it has passed away. She is a slave to her family and her kind heart. It's all very well when it's for Flo, whom she dotes upon, but for a parcel of brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts, cousins, etc., it is very provoking. She is like some one that has been boned as meat is. She is like a molluscous animal, she has lost the power of enjoyment; all the sharp and crisp edges of her impressions are so blunted by constantly giving up all for other people, that she cares for nothing. It is very amiable, but intensely vexatious, because this perpetual self-sacrificing makes her sacrifice her best friend to any relation. I would not mind if it was for her good, but I am the only person she knows who don't make use of her, and who wants her to do anything for her own sake. What a blessing it would be to be a foundling! Really, as a French lady said one day, "Je voudrais que tout le monde fût bâtard;" and all because she is single she is to be at their becks and calls. "What can she have to do? she has neither husband nor child." So her

soul is not her own; it's only married folk who have a right to such a possession.

Now you have read my fine-drawn book you can understand the terror that came over me at the idea of dear Mrs. —— helping me. Do tell me what she says of the platonics? No great sympathy that way, I suspect. If I had said the whole truth I should have said that these ancient manners were dying out; but they have left women in a better position—anybody may see that for himself; I have implied all this. Nothing is more ungraceful than saying everything as if Friend Reader was a goose. Thank you much for writing that people of taste and refinement will understand me, which I modestly believe to be very true.

Madame B—— is looking very handsome *en veuve decolletée*, which, I suppose, may answer to the "moderate affliction" department. Mrs. Hollond is a great favourite, and less *incomprise* here than in your ungallant country.

'Are you likely to come, and when? Your papa ought to be here. Many say this *régime* is driving downward at redoubled pace. They certainly do things they used not—ex.: last Saturday (15th), at a grand ball at Péreires, M. de Langle, Gardes des Sceaux, went up to a lawyer named Berton, who writes in the *Droit*, and asked him how he dared criticize a new law which had been discussed. "Sir," he said, "it was I who proposed that law." The article was extremely mild and cautious. The law was to declare that any man who had among his own private papers a caricature of any high functionary might be prosecuted. The whole ball-room was in a state of emotion. When Lavergne went in this had just happened; he did not hear it, but it was repeated to him, and he related it on Tuesday at Mrs. Hollond's. A gentleman on the 13th, two days before the scene, had just heard the law, and related it (at a dinner I gave to Arthur Stanley on his passage through Paris) to Laprade and Prévost-Paradol, who were beside him. At the Senate, Monday, the *séance* was quite violent. I wish your father was here for the sake of posterity. You know Laprade was *destitué* for answering St. Beuve's attack in the paper.


LIBRARY OF THE ROYAL BOMBAY

To Princess Batthyany.

DEAR FRIEND AND NEIGHBOUR,

I send you a little book to explain to you why I am fond of the French, in spite of all their faults, and to present you with an aspect of them that you never looked at before, I'm sure. France the South, which is real France, was the first country which recognized in women the rights which were the first steps to being responsible beings morally. Before chivalry they were property as much as an ox or a horse. Their only virtue was to be faithful to their *masters*, not to *themselves*. As Milton says, "He for God only, she for God in him." The Provençal poetry first gave to women the right to dispose of their affections, and identified love with enthusiasm and admiration. It spread all over Europe, more or less; but *there* it was indigenous, and it continued. It is *there* that the history of women's civilization began. Christianity had said it, but who took it up? No one before the twelfth century. Perhaps Ida has given you the little book to read; but I like to send it too, from me myself.

Yours ever, M. MOHL.

To Miss Bonham Carter.

I am quite ashamed of myself; I was so rude to H. He asked me, "Is L. N. still as popular here?" I said, "Can't you have understanding enough to see that, when there is a barrack in every three streets, when all the town is macadamized * from being paved, the man is hated?" His countenance showed he was perfectly astounded and affronted; but he bore it like a gentleman, which, as he was full of affectation, I did not think him till this self-command proved it. The stupidity of those who come here is incomprehensible, because they understand fast enough Russia, Austria, Naples, etc. They don't despise the Neapolitans or Italians; they make a fuss about them; but they either abuse the French for being in this state, or admire the despot, so won't believe it. Why don't they admire other despots, then?

I am waiting patiently here till a bookseller makes proposals to me to publish my book in French. They have bought it at the Institut; for, as Landresse said to Mr. Mohl, "I suppose madame

* For fear the paving-stones should be made into barricades.

won't give it us." "No, that she won't," says the other. Landresse won't buy any book by a member, because they ought to give it, he says. M. Guizot called on me the other day to thank me. I think I told you I met him somewhere, and he asked me to give it him. I am getting very much in fashion here, and am curious to see if they will know it in England, and if it will make the book sell there; for, after all, my success here can never be but among the fine people (as they alone read English) until it is translated. Robert Mohl has written a very fine report about "Hesse and its Duke," to the Diet; it will make him popular all over Germany, and detested by the Diet; but he is as bold as brass, and those are the only people worth anything. Maurice is elected, but it *was* a fight. We are a pugnacious set, and I am worthy of the name of Mohl, if courage is their forte, which it is.

We visited Paris again in the spring. The following note shows how much trouble Madame Mohl took to amuse us :—

March, 1862.

DEAR MINNIE,

Our dinner is unfortunate. Three of the folk besides Loménie are engaged. I believe everybody has vowed to give dinners on my days. I have been conning over and cannot find a better expedient than the following :—

To put off the dinner till the 31st or 1st, and then I shall ask Buloz. Can you come? I prefer Monday 31st, and I think Buloz can come, because his review must be printed; besides, if he can't, we shall do without. Monday is the day in the week that people are least engaged; besides which, I can't have people on Friday or Saturday, because I must have a meagre dinner and a fat dinner, a meagre soup and a fat soup, and that's a plague.

Secondly, I have planned a small breakfast for you to meet Renan. His father-in-law is just dead, and you know propriety would forbid his going out to dinner; but breakfast with you two and young Trevelyan would go down. I'll say you're going very soon—too soon, alas! Does this suit you? I can go to the *partie fine* on the 24th with ease; but if there was nothing good, I could go also Wednesday or Thursday. Answer if you approve of the Renan breakfast, and I will compose my letter to him.—Ever yours,

M. MOHL.

The season of 1862 was an especially brilliant one in London. The Exhibition, held for the first time at South Kensington, attracted some of the most distinguished men in Europe. My father was one of the jurors, and we kept almost open house. Every day there were guests at our breakfast-table, and we received every Friday evening. Among those who stayed in our house were the Archbishop of Dublin and his daughter; Madame and Mademoiselle de Peyronnet; and Madame Mohl.

She was delighted with the powerful original mind of Archbishop Whately, and quite content to listen to him. One day at breakfast he told us a remarkable story of a woman who married, when very young, a soldier, and was wrecked with him on the coast of India. All the crew and passengers were supposed to have been lost except this one woman, and an officer, who saved her. She was very beautiful, and he educated and married her. In time she became a widow and returned to England; he had left her all his money, and she was well received by his relations, being still very charming. One day her maid told her that she was going to be married to a discharged soldier. The mistress approved, and asked to see him. When he was introduced, after looking steadily at him for some minutes, she went up and fetched a shawl. "Do you know that shawl?" she asked. "Yes," he replied; "I gave it to my wife when we married." "I am your wife," she exclaimed. She took him back, and he drank away all his senses and her fortune, and finally died, after making her life miserable. The discussion which followed was very lively. The archbishop maintained that she was right—that she had no business to consider her happiness; that the only worthy object for us all is to do our duty, and that when we have reached the end of this journey of life, it will matter little whether we have travelled in a first class carriage, or plodded our way wearily on foot. Madame Mohl was

open-mouthed on the opposite side—declared that no woman ought to degrade herself; that she ruined not only her own life, but the lives of her husband and her maid, who would have done very well if she had held her tongue, and let them marry each other. She and the archbishop went into all sorts of moral questions, and we were all very much excited and interested, but as I was so much younger I took no part. She often recurred to this conversation, and years after, when I could not resist introducing the incident into a little story, she wrote to me—

I have just finished your book. The old archbishop's story came most *à propos*. I think it was a grand one, and the poor woman living with the old soldier-scamp till he killed himself with drink was of deeper dye than you have put it, letting alone the trimming I got for my immorality in declaring she was a goose, and should have kept it to herself, and your leaving me in the lurch, instead of saying what you thought, viz. that she had no right to keep her second husband's inheritance to feed the first with. It was a fine story. I think you ought to put it in a note, even if my opinion should be brought in to my detriment with his sharp reproof. It was a very memorable conversation.

After she left us she went again to stay close by with Miss Bonham Carter, so that we saw almost as much of her as when she was in our house.

In answer to a letter from Ireland.

Paris, October 13, 1862.

DEAREST MINNIE,

You have no notion how much I enjoyed your letter when I at last made it out, for I will not disguise to you that your hand is getting papa-ish (though like it in nothing but its difficulty). I'm extremely obliged to you for making friends for me, and I exhort you to go on, for I intend to make a tour in Ireland, and your letter has greatly increased my longing; and if my spouse won't go I shall take a niece. I have plenty to choose from, and I keep the purse,

so I go where I like; so direct all your Irish friends to me in Paris. How I do wish to see the wild place you describe!

I left Cold Overton on September 5, because my sister tormented herself at seeing me getting worse and having no advice. If I *had*, then indeed I should have got worse. I remained four days in London with Miss Carter, and went every day to see Lady William, who was very ill, but as charming and entertaining as ever. Lord Palmerston wanted her to go to Walmer Castle to breathe sea air, telling her she could be wheeled out on the terrace and see all the ships sailing by, and, as a great inducement, told her there were, I forget how many, thirty-six pounders she could amuse herself by firing. If she goes I promise to go with her, for she would be rather lonely, and I had rather be alone with her than with dozens of people.

I got here the 9th. I have spent five days at Madame de Circourt's,* which I much enjoyed. First, it's a very pretty place, and a very pleasant way of having tea in one's own room at one's own hour. A substantial breakfast at eleven with monsieur, whose conversation I like, though it is more of the monologue than the dialogue. He is ready to walk with one or let one alone. At three madame gets up, comes into the drawing-room; but then comes a parcel of visitors from all quarters—some good. Dine at six *en tête-à-tête* with monsieur and sometimes a straggler. *Causeries* in the evening; madame there till half-past nine. M. de Belvès came, but so ill that he could only stay two hours with us. I'm afraid he's dying—at least is incurable. He's a most agreeable person. Do you know him? He's one of those patterns of friendship peculiar to this country, he is perfectly devoted to madame, and monsieur likes him better than any one else, and is ready to go to the world's end with him. Madame de Circourt has been in the state you see for six or seven years; he has been as devoted to her as a dog. Now, whatever it may be, I do say that it is very interesting, and better than a parcel of humdrum matrimonial folk who merely go on tolerably because they have a community of interests; neither will I ever believe that such perfect friendship can belong to any but very refined people. It began something like twenty years ago. M. de Belvès is rich, of a noble family of Languedoc, highly considered, and might have found all sorts of distractions; he has *beaucoup d'esprit* and charming manners. It is too delightful to have such a friend. I have another belief which I have tried to insinuate in that *chef-*

* Les Bruyères, in the environs of Paris.

d'œuvre you wot of, viz. that it is only platonics that have this lasting principle in them. I don't speak against marriage, because that has another element of duration than intense liking; it is a useful partnership of interests, and therefore it does without the exquisite sympathy. Of course, if it combines both, it is all the better; but it seldom does, because people marry without ever thinking of it. The ordinary instincts blind them, and it is only when these are to a certain degree *blasé*, or crushed, or surmounted that the taste and mind are free. M. de Belvès can't help speaking of Madame de Circourt whenever he can find an ear that will sympathize. He can't help being angry with her—for what? For letting herself be bored and fatigued by tiresome people. He can't help talking of her heroism, analyzing her character. He is always occupied about her, and she, poor thing, is always in pain and almost flayed alive; so it is all mental. She has added to her troubles the dread of his not being able to leave Les Bruyères, for he can travel almost less than she can, and if he can't come to Paris they must stay in the country all the winter. M. de Circourt is just as anxious as she is, and ready to sacrifice everything to M. de Belvès. I shall give her your message; she has a great fancy for you.

M. de Loménie is very busy about Mirabeau, and going to Provence to see his family house. There's no one here hardly, but we are in intense anxiety about an election at the Academy. One candidate is a friend of Mr. Mohl. These elections have always a great interest; they're like a game of chess. R—— has written a long rigmarole to prove he was right in that unfortunate opening speech. He had better have let it alone; but if you observe when folks have a sore place and a lump they are always touching it, and it makes it worse. I hope you'll come this winter. I have just claimed my two places at the Pas de Loup concerts, and shall be delighted if you'll come to go with me. Miss Carter is still in London. She says you were most kind, and took her as she was—did not stand on ceremony with her. I'm so glad you like her; she can do so little for society, though she enjoys it, so it is doubly valuable when she finds people who will be indulgent to her uncertain ways. She is the best of creatures, and never does anything for her own good. Kindest love, etc.

P.S.—Pray make a friendship for me with Lord Monteagle; he is such a nice old man.

January 5, 1863.

I have a letter from Ampère, who has at last made up his mind that, though you are a fine lady, you can translate his book. I believe, if you had been old and snuffy and ugly, he would have thought it more likely, for be it known to you that the French women of 1862 are not the same as those of 1762; they are much less clever than the English ones now, and that I attribute to the neglect of the Englishmen, who have thrown Englishwomen on their own resources. Perhaps you will say, how is it that their admiration made the women so clever two centuries ago, and that neglect makes them clever in England? *D'abord*, they were charming as well as clever, because they were admired; in England they are *not* charming when they are clever; barring the exceptions, they are very disagreeable, because neglect makes people disagreeable, but it don't always make them stupid; they study, and grow to a certain degree independent, but in a cross crusty way, and those that don't, the ordinary misses, have a particular way of saying, "Gentlemen so and so," "We can't go without a gentleman," "Gentlemen don't like it," that always makes me long to box their base, grovelling ears (this *entre nous*). The few French folk who have read my mite of a book like it; and well they may, when I have been so civil to them. I wonder whether they'll be angry in England. However, I have a great fancy to make a homage to the Queen Marie Amélie; so will you be so kind as to ask that charming man, M. de Mussy, if it will be thought an impertinence or a respect? and if the latter, will you ask Miss Bonham Carter for a copy, and write down, as from me, the speech most proper from his dictation, either on the fly-leaf or the envelope, and ask him to present it. Tell him I have the highest respect for the queen; that my husband, being a naturalized French subject, has never considered L. N. but as an accident, and the Orleans family as the real and desirable sovereigns. As for me, I never have dirtied my tongue by calling him emperor, therefore we consider ourselves still as the subjects of the Orleans family; but if she was on the throne I should keep my homage to myself. Small and poor as it is, it's all I have, and I'm sure *now* it is an effusion of respect. I would write down, "As a testimony of veneration, the author humbly begs to present it to her Majesty;" but ask him if that is right, and if he thinks I should not do it, just let the matter rest.

January 20, 1863.

I cannot think without shame and even disgust at myself for being so long without answering your most charming letter. It's no use wasting time in telling all my excuses, which amount to being incapable of writing if I don't write immediately on the spur of the letter just received. I am either a very bad or a very good correspondent. I answered our Grota instantly; if I had put it off I was done for. As far as I can make out we may hope to see you in a month or two; and won't we go to the play! I'm extremely well, and up to anything. My chief going place has been Madame de Circourt's, who talks of you with *ravissement*—that's a dangerous word in English, a man said one day; it was not Hayward.

The "Fils de Giboyer" goes on night after night, filling the house, and, moreover, the reviews, for it has been much talked of and abused. Up to this I have kept it to go with you. They say it's incomparably acted. When will you come? Tell me for I'm like a child keeping a cake and passing my tongue on my lips at the thought of it.

Little Arconati * is here—a sort of *bijou* to put on an *étagère* or in a jewel-box. It's a complete little article, not artificial nor seemingly natural, but so pretty. When anything of the sort is produced in England it is all affectation; this is not. He has a cousin, a Trotti, grandson to Manzoni, extremely taking, about twenty-two, an artist, quite different, and I like *him* the best; but they are both things to have and like. Pray forgive me, and heap coals of fire on my head by writing magnanimously. I won't hate you because I ought to be grateful. What do they say of Mexico in England? We are indignant. Adieu; love, etc.

In the following letter Madame Mohl alludes to a most amusing lesson we heard together, given by Sanson to the pupils of the Conservatoire. He was kind enough to invite us. The only other guest was Legouvé. We and some of the chaperons of the young ladies were in the boxes. The pupils were arranged, the girls on one side and the young men on the other. Sanson sat alone in the pit, with a table before him. He rang a bell, and ordered Mademoiselle ——

* Madame Arconati's son. He died early, not long before his mother.

and Mademoiselle —— to repeat a scene from "Iphigénie." The heroine was not sufficiently tender, and he interrupted her to act the scene himself. "Achille!" he exclaimed in melting accent, and went on to say that she must speak her lover's name in quite a different tone from that in which she uttered anything else. Then two men acted a scene in the "Misanthrope," and so on, with Sanson's comments and examples. Madame Mohl was delighted. She liked Sanson very much; and I remember a dinner at her house, at which Mignet, Cousin, Guizot, Prévost-Paradol, and other great men were present, and how gracefully they gave way to the veteran actor, who amused us all with his experiences, especially by his account of the early days and extraordinary genius of Rachel.

February 23, 1863.

DEAREST MINNIE,

This is to introduce to you Mr. Helmholtz, the spouse of my niece Anna; he lives at Heidelberg, where he is in great repute as a learned physiologist (I believe) and mathematician too. How the two things go together I can't conceive; but, then, I'm an ass. He has a great reputation, so I bow my long-ear'd head and bray. . . . I go scraping about to get news of you, and, like the *chiffonniers*, get nothing but old shreds. If I had written I should have had a good real piece, and a letter into the bargain; but I am always interrupted. Once having written the introductory, I go on.

I was at M. Guizot's ten days ago. Pauline and her spouse were there. He looks blooming. We have nought but politics, except Sanson's lectures (on the Quai Malaquais); not so *croustillant** as what we heard together, as it is for the promiscuous public, not for the delicate damsels we saw studying. They are capital, chiefly showing how to read, but interspersed with much literature of the good time—a sort of thing I delight in. To hear him read an *exorde* of Bossuet's is a perfect treat. He reads a fable of Lafontaine each time, and each is as good as a comedy. Montalembert is so cut up at his daughter's taking the veil, he has grown ten years older in six months; he looked as if he could scarcely help shedding tears when

* Racy.

I saw him. Few pity him; they say, "Well, he ought to have expected it." But he did not expect it. She was his companion, his playfellow, his secretary, his friend, his darling; always cheerful, always helpful. I believe he is hurt at her having the heart to leave him. He can't say so, for his Catholicism would stand up like a flaming sword; but I'm sure it is so. You know these people say, "Take up your cross and follow Christ;" but they don't consider that the follower who leaves father and mother does not, after all, follow Christ for the sake of Christ, who does not want his help, but for his own salvation. Now, it is a question whether this overwhelming love of salvation is really as Christian as doing one's duty and thinking of other people. Of course I did not say this to Montalembert; but the father was stronger in him than the fanatic, and I could almost have cried with him, I was so touched by his deep and smarting pain.

Barthélemy expects Mrs. Austin. Miss Carter is with us, having her statue of Florence Nightingale reduced in size. There has been much noise about the minister taking into his hands the School of Art, appointing Neukerke as head of all. He got hissed by the students, who ran after him from the Institut across the Pont des Arts, and sang, "O Mathilde, idole de mon âme." . . . (Excuse all this scratching; I think it safest.)

March 3, 1863.

I am reading your pa's, and it strikes me that I behaved like a pig in not writing long ago to tell him I had his parcel safe from Gustave de Beaumont. Perhaps, after all, I did write, but I could not read it immediately from various hurries and bothers, and hoping they would go away I deferred till I could; but the hurries and bothers have gone on as much as ever. The chief cause is that I have been hardly five days without a visitor since the beginning of December, and of course I have done my best to make them enjoy themselves. I like them, I like to be useful to them; but it takes a great deal out of me, as I am but a poor creature at best. I have now Mrs. Gaskell and her youngest daughter, and if you come soon—which I hope you will—you will see them. Pray let me know when you are coming, that I may hoard up any little play-going or partyfying that may be pending. Tell Mr. Senior I am amazingly interested in his "Ireland in 1862.' Tell me if you have read Mrs. Gaskell's

"Sylvia's Lovers." She came here to avoid hearing about it; for she is not like me, a parvenu in literature, who likes to talk and hear talk of her newly acquired notoriety, whether good or bad. It bothers her, and she gets enormous compliments here which she don't know how to pocket and thank for.

There are cartloads of stories about the masked balls at the Tuileries and other *guinguettes* here. . . . I suppose you know that *tutoyering* is usual under a mask, all respect being abolished.

I have not time for more.

M. M.

We reached Paris on March 29. These visits of my father's, of which this was destined to be the last, had every year increased in interest. Although he never ceased to regret the gaps which death had already made (such as those left by Tocqueville and others), still acquaintances became friends as time went on, and new ones were added. The kindness and hospitality shown to us in Paris can never be forgotten by the only surviving member of our party, and we saw so much of no one as of Madame Mohl. She came to stay with us in London in July, also for the last time in our old home, which was soon afterwards broken up.

The Dean of Westminster's marriage with Lady Augusta Bruce was a very important event for Madame Mohl. They had met for the first time at a dinner in the Rue du Bac, after which the dean said to his mother that he had seen the only woman he ever could marry. Madame Mohl was very proud of having had a hand in forming such a prosperous union. She was not pleased when her men-friends married women whom she did not know or did not like; in such cases the unhappy wife seldom gained any favour in her eyes. She wrote from Paris—

Rue du Bac, December 12, 1863.

DEAREST MINNIE,

I shall ask for some Russian stamps for my nephews too by the same opportunity. My nephews and nieces fill every table-drawer

of my apartment with rubbish, or rather I do for them; one has a collection of stamps, one a collection of cyphers, another of seals, another of all of them, another of autographs, another begs for the cast off of each. The ladies made a commerce of stamps last summer in the Tuileries Gardens, when a policeman came up to Madame de Lavergne and turned her out, with many others, saying it was dishonouring the garden to make an exchange of it. She went to her spouse in great dudgeon, complaining and whining till she made him go to the governor of the palace to get justice; but they got no redress, and the ladies are strictly forbidden all approach to every negotiation of the sort. She is so vexed! She showed me the matter of at least twelve different Russian stamps in her book, but they never put these on foreign letters; they are very different and like tesselated pavements.

I was very low at your pa not being so well in your last letter, and you asked me for an entertaining letter, as if they could be kept up in bottles in the cellar and poured out at will; and this brings to my mind that Lady Augusta wrote to me three weeks ago, to think of her on the 22nd of this month, as it was to be *the* day, and toast her; so I invited a few of our mutual friends for the purpose. Two days ago I heard it was to be on the 16th, and I altered the day to it; now I am told Lord Elgin is dead, but I can't help it, and shall make no more alterations; so the people will come, and we shall drink some champagne to her, married or not. It seems Arthur is as much in love as if he were twenty or rather, perhaps, as if he were a good deal older than he is; old passions are stronger than young ones. I should think the banns must have been published before the bad news came, and that they would not put it off. I wrote to Mary Stanley yesterday to know.

All my old haunts are stopped up; like a rat, I have no place to run into. To comfort myself I have been often to the Italian Opera; there's a Madame Lagrange who really sings well, and a good tenor, though not comparable to Mario. There's a new play, "Montjoie" by Octave Feuillet, much talked of. I must find out whether there are any *scènes scandaleuses* before I can take my niece of sixteen, just out of her village; or if I can explain things by a secret marriage, as I did about Norma, whom I married to Pollione, without banns, long before the opera began. I was more bothered about Lucrezia Borgia; but she was a very wicked woman, and her son passed off

in the crowd of her crimes. If I had not the ridiculous stories of the Institut, and the candidatures, which Mr. Mohl picks up for me every day, I should grow mouldy over my books. Tell me something about Grota; she is my delight. Lavergne is very *gentil;* his book is very good. You ought to give an abstract of it in a review; it shows a wonderful spirit of progress in France ten or twelve years before the Revolution, when she made all the real reforms which have been attributed to those who pushed out the reformers. Adieu.

CHAPTER X.

1864–1866.

Dissipation of puffy ignorance—Renan—"Causeries Parisiennes"—Thinking prevents readiness—State of Germany—Schleswig Holstein—No society without eating—Terror of a revolution—*Bals costumés*—Morality of Madame Mohl's friends—Reception of emperor at the play—Prévost-Paradol's lectures interdicted—Respect for age in Paris—Bishop Jeune—Montalembert and Renan—Guizot and Metternich—Death of young German—Death of Ampère—Sanson's lectures—Difficulty of composing parties—Ampère and Loménie—Visit of Queen Victoria to the deanery—Frystone—The fine arts—Julius Mohl on Petersthal—The Queen of Holland—Milan—The Manzonis—Tired of travelling—Mrs. Gaskell's "Cranford"—Importance of occupation to women—Letters of sympathy—Love for Mr. Senior—Illness of Miss Carter—Duchess Colonna—Death of Miss Carter—Death of Lincoln—Lanfrey's "History of Bonaparte"—"Causeries Parisiennes"—Emancipation of the serfs—Of slaves—Effect of war—Scotland—Quiet life—Old books—Ida's visit—Petulance—Vanity—Exhibition—"Shah Nameh"—German visitors—Liebreich—A troublesome funeral.

MADAME MOHL wrote to me very frequently and at great length in this year for the sake of amusing my father, who was very ill.

Paris, January 22, 1864.

DEAR MINNIE,

I have long been going to write, and I might have gone on so, but I want to know how your papa is; that is sufficient to overcome all dilatoriness. Mrs. Grant Duff told me kind messages from you, and added that you would write but that you were out of spirits. I am sure I don't wonder if he is ill, and after seeing those poor Thackeray girls.* I was so sorry for them; will you tell them so? Really, it is too great a trial!

H—— has been to Russia, stopped at Warsaw, and there he

* W. M. Thackeray died on December 24, 1863.

cooled his Polish passions, being somewhat disinflated by seeing some facts. Nothing takes away from a certain puffy state of ignorant admiration, which the public delight in, so much as seeing facts. You are no longer full of blubber, but have got some bone and sinew into you.

Lady Salisbury is here, and wants beyond measure to see Renan. As she showed me Queen Elizabeth's oak, I must give her a tit-for-tat, and ask him here. I dare not have him with most of my acquaintances; they look so sour at him, not for his heterodoxy but his politics. I have invited him to breakfast, but I'm like the lad who had a goat and a wolf and a cabbage to carry across the river; for I have a niece of sixteen, who, if she breakfasts with the arch-heretic, will talk of it in the family, and if they think I keep such company they won't let her come again. Now, I'm very fond of her, so I shall send her out. Miss Carter will help me; she is with me. Her statue of Miss Nightingale came unbroken, and is going to be made small and sold about, I hope, even in English farmhouses. I miss Madame de Circourt more and more, and Mrs. Hollond too. She is at Nice, and some say will never be able to winter anywhere else; however, I should say, by her letter to me, she is much better. Madame de Peyronnet is going on in great triumph in a sort of well-known secrecy, no one ever talking to her of her articles.*

Adieu, dear Minnie. Pray tell me how Mr. Senior is. My kindest love to both, and believe in mine with all your might.

Yours ever,

M. MOHL.

To Lady William Russell.

February 23, 1864.

DEAREST MILADI,

If I had written every time I thought of you, I might have done little else—even every time I quoted a *bon-mot* of yours to Mr. Mohl; but these bring no answers, so I must even turn thoughts into words, and do the contrary of the alchemist; for thoughts are gold, and few can turn them into words that are not dross. "Thinking makes a deep man, not a ready one." How often what Bacon says comes to my mind! I believe much thinking even

* The "Causeries Parisiennes." Madame Mohl was a great admirer of all that Madame de Peyronnet wrote.

prevents readiness. It is a habit of concentration that grows into a solitary pleasure which I have got into.

You want to hear about Germany. My brother-in-law Robert writes the most desponding letters from Frankfort. He sees no issue. I am told that our queen holds to Germany against Denmark, that the prince holds to Denmark, that the ministers are for Denmark because they think it wise to go with the next heir; but as Lord Palmerston is going on for eighty, and the queen is about forty-three, he need not, I should think, trouble himself about the heir. The Germans are enraged at England, and Lord John's letters have made the whole country hate us. I know nothing about the right or the wrong. When I was at Frankfort fourteen years ago to see the National *Versammlung*, the Holstein affair was just as burning a question as now, and from the account I had they were shamefully treated by those stupid Danes, who would not allow them the constitution they had bargained for when they joined them, and who are not powerful enough to keep them against their will without foreign help. It puts me in mind of a story. "Mon capitaine, j'ai fait un prisonnier." "Eh bien, amène-le." "Mon capitaine, il ne veut pas me laisser-aller." When one ain't strong enough to be tyrannical, one should be conciliatory.

March 8, 1864.

DEAREST MILADI,

No letter from you, so I must write again, to extract a line at least. I called the other day on Lady Holland, who was very gracious, thanks to you. Oh, I have lived long enough in this world to know that our real friends are the only ones who will take the trouble to bear us up on the waters of success—like corks—and I always know the sincerity of my friends by the behaviour of those they see often. If I had known that a good many years ago, I should not have been the dupe that I often have been.

Will you tell Arthur I saw his Indian yesterday? Mr. Mohl called on him the day after he brought his letter, but of course did not find him. Sir Charles MacCarthy is here, and quite as delightful as ever; he says Arthur's Hindoo is very clever. My first question was—Does he eat? for a Brahmin who was here four years ago did not. Now, one can do nothing for people who don't eat, and yet this is not such a gluttonous place as London; but to collect at your

very own choice a certain number of people together is impossible without it. The Hindoo wants to see philosophers; I will introduce him to Barthélemy and Jules Simon.

The Batthyany is plunged in fine people, so I see little of her; she is always charming. She has been to all the scandalous balls, and will amuse you much; I heard of nothing else a month ago but the repartees of the *bals costumés*. Congreve is witty, at least; but these had all his coarseness without the wit.

I hear from Stuttgart that the king is so weak he can scarcely be expected to last long. His poor, poor daughter! * We are all in the dark here about the intentions of the Government. The *Morning Post* announces that the French will go to war, and as it is bought by the French many think it ominous. Discontent increases, but a curious thing is that some of those who were fondest of Louis Philippe are the strongest upholders of this Government, not from liking it, but from terror of Revolution.

March 13, 1864.

DEAREST MINNIE,

I called the other day on Lady Holland, who was extremely agreeable and courteous. Duvergier de Hauranne and his son were there, and overflowing with court, or rather ministerial, ball scandal (where they won't go). Certainly the *bals costumés* are something out of all proportion with the state of morals and manners of the mass of the nation. My agreeable friend, the Batthyany, went to them all from curiosity in a quiet domino, except to the Tuileries, which are much less worth it; the Metternich's, Bassano's, and others being more racy and less proper than the Tuileries, who have a *leetle* more appearance of propriety to keep up. Young unmarried ladies are scarcely seen there. The thing most talked of *au dehors* by ladies in whispers, and not mentioned by gentlemen before them, was the Marquis —— disguised as a cock, with wings flapping and outstretched, and to act this character *au naturel*, he hopped after some ladies after the fashion of a cock in a *basse-cour*, paying more court to the hens than would be considered proper in a biped without feathers. I don't think the court of Charles II., or the Regency, or Louis XV., or the Directoire, ever attempted such imitations of nature in public. They might be as vicious, but they

* The Queen of Holland.

were far more decent, and had more taste. Some of the plays of the days of Charles II. approach the nearest; but the conversation is worse than in them. This is what I am *told*, yet, *en dehors de tout cela*, I see nothing but loving young *ménages*, living economically and laying up for the children; the mammas all occupied either in nursing, or teaching, or walking, or taking them to *cours*. Now, as I don't pick out my acquaintance for their morality, but for the quality of their minds in general, I conclude that society is split up in two, and thus the mass which is underneath is like the *bouillon* under the scum of the *pot-au-feu*. There are new plays which make a noise, particularly the "Marquis de Villemer," by Georges Sand. Louis Napoleon went there with his wife the first night; some say they were hissed, at any rate the "Sire de Framboisy" was sung, "Eh, madame, que faites vous ici?" and the "Marseillaise." A detachment of troops was sent for to take them home, so frightened were they. They will be in no hurry to come to the Odéon again, for it is in the Quartier Latin, the younkers' own theatre, and they will say their say. Jules Simon is so busy I don't see him. Public lectures are going on under favour of the Polish wounded, and M. Lebrun, a senator and renegado, is much afflicted at this outburst of *discours* which tends to influence the public mind. However, they have refused to let Prévost-Paradol lecture on Montaigne! *S'il vous plaît!*

Madame Mollien has company three nights a week, because she is blind and seventy-nine—and good company, too. MM. Guizot, Daru, Cuvillier, Fleury, Viel-Castel, Duchâtel, etc., etc. You ought to have the same. Some come two or three times a week. Guizot always does. It is still the custom to go to one's old friends; but, alas! it will be all gone twenty years hence; the town is growing too large. There is an imitation of London—large parties, luxury, and expense—encouraged by this fellow, who would be very sorry if the good was imitated; but it is so much easier to ape vices than virtues, that the moment people begin aping at all they always stick to the bad.

March, 29, 1864.

I saw the Bishop * to-day, who brought me your father's book; † pray thank him kindly. I never had read the article on Walter

* Dr. Jeune, of Peterborough. † "Essays on Fiction."

Scott, who is, of all the writers in the world, the one I like the best; and I asked him if he could dine with Montalembert. He said he could, I shall read it with great curiosity. The Bishop is mighty agreeable, and I wrote to M. immediately. I am not quite so great a favourite with Montalembert as I was, because he came here last Friday, and, after being like turtle-doves for half an hour, in come Renan and his wife. Montalembert got into the furthest corner in which he could ensconce himself, talked a little with Madame Autran, then walked off. I ran after him to talk about the election at the Académie. He said he must go; he could not stay in the room with Renan. I can't give up Renan—he's of Mr. Mohl's academy; they are always having business together. I don't think you have these antipathies in England.

Sir Charles MacCarthy dined here yesterday with Guizot, Madame de Witt and her handsome spouse, and others. Guizot entertained us with the *bons-mots* of Prince Metternich. They met continually in England during their exile, and Metternich read him some of his memoirs—very amusing to Guizot, who knew the people, but rather too long for the public. They both talked over their respective revolutions and flights; I would have given something to hear them compare notes. Metternich's great pretension was to write very well—in short, like an artist, both in German and French.

Mr. Mohl is in terrible spirits, having lost a German friend, very learned, whom he has been helping and shoving on these fifteen years, and when he was in hopes, in two years longer, he would have a great name, as a *savant*, he was worn out with overwork and disappointment, and died last Friday, at the age of thirty-seven. I never saw any one so cut up as Mr. Mohl; and yesterday he learnt that our dear friend Ampère died at Pau suddenly. This was a great shock to *me*, but to *him* the German's death was much more painful. He had had such a melancholy life and no success, and now he had at last some chance, and was such an honest and conscientious creature. There is something terrible in a man of superior mind dying without ever having had any sunshine in his life; it seems so hard. Ampère had had much success, much delight, had enjoyed many things to a high degree. There is no end of lamentations here; he was the most entertaining, the most vivacious converser I have ever known, and all the ladies used to try to get him to their parties. All society regrets him, though his long absences

made him a great rarity. Lomênie was very much attached to him, and I hope will succeed him in his professorship at the Collége de France.

Sanson, the actor, has given the most delightful lectures I ever heard. The last, on political eloquence, was more curious than any of them; he read a speech of Mirabeau's to support Necker's proposal for a loan to prevent a bankruptcy. It was something unique, from his manner of bringing out the beauties and the art. The whole lecture was on Mirabeau. I do so wish you had heard all these lectures. I am very anxious to know how your papa is. Kindest love to both him and Mrs. Senior. This is but a melancholy letter, but these deaths have extinguished me.

April 7, 1864.

I did my best for the Milord Bishop. I could get no one to meet him at dinner on the only day he could give me, which was at three days' notice, and it is impossible at this time of year and just after to get a tolerable party under a week, or even ten days, as after fasting, or pretending to fast, all Lent, dinner-parties grow fast and furious. He offered to come to breakfast on Monday, and as the marriage ceremony of Mademoiselle Dufaure was to take place at twelve, and all *la société* was there, that too had its difficulties. However, Simon came, and Barthélemy and Corcelle and M. Gigot. The monsignore is *wonderfully* agreeable, I must say; there is a grace and sociability about him. I don't know if he knew that Jules Simon is a person of great reputation here.

I go to the reception of Dufaure to-day; there will be a terrible crowd. They say there will be no political allusions, nor any compliments. I can't think what the discourse will be made up of. You know, of course, our loss of M. Ampère; he died of heart complaint; was particularly well on the Saturday, talked incessantly—said he had thirty volumes in his head. He was at Pau with the Chevreux, and was in such spirits that Madame Chevreux was almost afraid he had a fever. One of the servants being ill, the doctor, on coming downstairs, was requested to feel his pulse, and said it was very fluttering, and ordered digitalis. At five a violent ringing of the bell made her and the cook rush into his room. He was half out of bed, and said, "Oh, how I suffer!" and died. He has left a will, written nine years ago—about thirty thousand francs, which is

all he leaves, is to print all his books and his father's, to be done by Loménie, and a little by one D'Aremberg. He don't say that Loménie is to have the copyright, so poor Loménie is to give up his time, and distant relations will claim the profits. In his will he also says that Loménie is to print all his political verses as soon as there is no danger. Now all wills are deposed *au greffe*, and the procureur-général (I think that is the functionary whose business it is to look after the wills and what is in them), Bénoit Champy, is a violent Bonapartist, so he read the verses; they are kept at the *greffe*, and if Ampère doubted of their being printable, you may imagine the disgust of a doting functionary; and poor Loménie can't even see them. He might perhaps claim the right of seeing them, and go to law for it; but he would lose, and get himself turned out of everything. Poor Ampère did not know that all wills are public, and are the last places where people should deposit secrets. He is more universally lamented than any one I have ever known. He hopes in his will that Loménie will succeed him at the Collége de France and at the Institut. Loménie is going to try to finish his Mirabeau next winter to present himself.

Deanery, Westminster, June, 1864.

I heard the sad news* from Lady Augusta about a week ago. I came here last night, and I don't like to go to you without first writing. Will you tell me when I can go and see you. And how is poor Mrs. Senior? Oh dear! there is no misfortune in this world but the death of those we love. I have come to that by dint of living.

The visit of Queen Victoria, which has been so strangely misrepresented, occurred while Madame Mohl was at the deanery this year. I have heard from one of the dean's family that the Queen never, on any occasion, dropped in at the deanery by chance. The visit was always announced beforehand, and the dean and Lady Augusta received her Majesty at the foot of the staircase.

Madame Mohl was in her bedroom one afternoon when Lady Augusta came in and said, "Put on your cap and

* N. W. Senior died on June 4.

come and see your queen." When she was presented to her Majesty Madame Mohl went down on one knee, "very prettily," as I am told, and kissed the Queen's hand. "My dear," she said afterwards to one of her nieces, "I felt quite emotioned." She describes the conversation which followed in a letter to Madame von Schmidt :—

(*Translation.*)

Malvern, July 22, 1864.

MY DEAR CHILD,

. . . You are very much mistaken if you fancy that the English do not trouble themselves about peace or war. I never saw London in such a state as it was from the time of Lord Palmerston's first long speech, which finished by owning that the Danes were in the wrong, till the evening, when the majority of eighteen decided that there was no sufficient cause for censure. We were all in a fever, although most people thought that there were excellent reasons for blaming the ministry. All who wished for peace wished them to stay in. Palmerston is bad, but the Tories are much worse, and if he had gone the alliance with L. N. would have been still closer; but I believe that the real reason why we have not had war is that the Queen would not. But her influence is so occult that no one ever alludes to it without saying, "So people say on the Continent." I asked Lady Augusta, who knows more than any one, straight out. She answered, "Oh, certainly; her wishes have had some influence." But Lady Augusta says what she pleases, and not what she knows. I think I told you that I was presented to the Queen on Tuesday, I think the 28th, at Augusta's, on the day following that on which Palmerston delivered the memorable speech which changed everything. Arthur Russell came from the House on the 27th to his mother's, and repeated to us Palmerston's speech word for word, and ended by saying, "There will not be war." I was so pleased that, forgetting all etiquette, I repeated it to the Queen, and she replied, looking equally well pleased, "No; we shall have no war." If I have told you this before, it is worth telling again; but the most curious thing is the sort of revulsion of public opinion during the five weeks I spent in London.

Cold Overton, August 10, 1864.

DEAREST MINNIE,

I got to Malvern the 18th, and saw all our haunts at Whitfield between the 2nd and 6th, which time I spent with Mrs. Clive, and enjoyed greatly being with her alone. I am going to Frystone, and it is probable I shall leave England about September 12, because Mr. Mohl thinks he can go with me to see Madame Arconati and the Belgiojoso; at least, so it was settled four months ago, "Mais l'homme propose, et Dieu dispose;" and these ladies may have changed their mind. I have a peculiarly doubting mind about all fine ladies—which they are, though they don't know it. I shall join my spouse at Basle, and hope to find him dressed spick and span with a new liver; for he is gone to an unknown region called Petersthal, where people find the article in a spring. Mr. Milnes is going to Vichy, which my spouse hates, but which he will sigh after, I suspect, in his present abode. He has no books, not one, nor no way of getting any. He was constantly with Mr. and Mrs. Grote before he left Paris. He greatly likes the historian, and I shall write to ask her how she liked her rustication, which Paris is in summer.

To Miss Eleanor Martin.

. . . D—— is what is called *anémique*. The complaint is so common in Germany, that in a place called Petersthal, in the Black Forest, where Mr. Mohl goes for his liver, there are above eight hundred ladies, most of them young, and all looking like ghosts. Fancy eight hundred ghosts walking about in the forest; for there are both liver waters and ghosty ones. It's a wonderful place. . .

To Lady William Russell.

Frystone, August 21, 1864.

DEAREST MILADI,

I got here last night, and am told that you were here exactly at this time last year, just to make my mouth water. Mr. Milnes is charming in his own house. It's very cold here, but no one knows it but myself. I wonder every one don't live in London all the year round, the trees are of a better green, all trees a hundred or even fifty miles north of London are of a blue-green.

We had a reading of Shakespeare last night, just as two of us were primed and cocked for a conversation. However, it's better than bad singing, which one is perpetually having one's mouth stopped with, and one's ears called upon forcibly to listen to; and, by-the-by, to think of my never having heard your son Odo! As much as I hate bad singing, I delight in it when to my taste. Mr. Milnes related to me that when he was fourteen, being very fond of music, he had practised pretty hard for three years on the piano, teaching himself, and could accompany himself, and play greatly to his own amusement. One day his father begged of him to listen to a *solemn request*, and adjured him, by all his *filial piety*, never to touch a piano. He promised and obeyed, and when some years afterwards he tried again, the power was gone. What a curious prejudice! And now one is assassinated with a fine-art jargon from every Jackanapes and Jackanapess, till one takes all the arts *en grippe*. It's a judgment on the Chesterfieldian generation that their descendants should all dote upon fiddling, fiddlers, etc.

Julius Mohl to Lady William Russell.

Petersthal, Grand Duchy of Baden, August 25, 1864.

DEAR LADY WILLIAM,

I am sure you wonder who may be your correspondent from the Black Forest. But those abominable Sabbatarians oblige me to use your house as a supplementary post-office, and to beg you to keep the enclosed scrap for my wife, who will certainly call on you.

I have been about three weeks in this obscure valley to drink certain bitter waters, because they contain a new-fangled metal called lithium, without which our fathers contrived to keep their livers in tolerable case, but which, according to the modern Hakims, is indispensable for mine. The most curious part is that the Bad-arzt here had not the slightest suspicion of this new power of his waters, which he thinks fit for innumerable evils, but particularly for pale ladies, who crowd this place and a number of neighbouring watering-places by hundreds. The air, the brooks, the woods, the green, are beautiful, but the patients mostly very insipid, and as the place has not yet been discovered by the English, it is yet in a very primitive state. Pray don't mention that all the brooks contain trout. But I am not only steeped here in these vile waters, but in the bitter waters of

theology too. There is a number of dyspeptic and very peppery theologians here, and I am becoming deep in German theology of the most modern forms, orthodox as well as heretic, and food for the eternal bonfire below; but they are very far from such sweeping conclusions, and fight it out tooth and nail. I read their books and get up again my long-forgotten theology.

Before I came here I went to the Hague to see your friend the queen. I spent three days at her country house in the Bush—old King William's queer house, which she has arranged to her taste, and where she lives quite alone, teaching her little boy. Poor thing! I found her deeply afflicted by the loss of her father; and well she may be, as she has nobody else to confide in. She talked much of you, and I am sure it would be a good work if you would write to her. She feels so lonely and abandoned that she is grateful for any attention one may show to her. "Ce n'était pas la peine d'être reine pour mener une pareille vie."

I am glad to have had this excuse for reminding you of me. I only hope this scratch will find you in tolerable health and spirits.

I am, dear Lady William,

Very respectfully yours,

J. MOHL.

The proposed visit to Italy was carried into effect.

Madame Mohl to Miss Eleanor Martin.

Milan, September 22, 1864.

We went yesterday to Brusuglio. M. Manzoni received me with his wonted grace, was very cheerful. We stayed an hour and a half. The house is kept by his son (ill in bed) and his wife. We saw neither, but saw the husband of his only remaining daughter. She, too, was ill; she has a dreadful complaint in the bones of her face, which disfigures her extremely, and she won't show herself. We saw two very pretty children. I don't think he remembered distinctly the visit we paid him, when his daughter was dying in the house and his mother received us; but it might be that the recollection would call back too many painful losses, and that he would not allude to it. He certainly did not, but only to the many pleasant conversations we had had long ago. The little grandchild of three years was so taking I would have carried her off, in spite of all prudence, if she had been given to me. . . .

Mr. Mohl was so poorly all day that he could not eat, with palpitations. We met on the steamboat with an acquaintance, a Professor Allman, and his wife, whom I knew slightly before. He is the director of the Museum of Natural History at Edinburgh, and lecturer on it. They are nice people, and we stay here till to-morrow because they stay; and Mr. Allman is a doctor, though he don't practise. Mr. Mohl is better to-day, and been taken by the Marchese Lita (she is Madame Arconatis' sister) to the Ambrosian Library, where he will meet with a learned man and dusty manuscripts, which I rejoice at; but to-morrow we go, and I shall never see Milan again. I hope to be in Paris 30th at night; and oh! how I do long to be there! I have no longer the delight in travelling that I had when I was young; it was then incomparable; and though with very little money, great fatigue and anxiety on account of my poor mother's health, and the economy we practised, my spirits never flagged. Now, with none of these drawbacks, with Mr. Mohl who takes all the trouble, I am ever wishing to be at home. It is only when I travel that I feel the loss of youth, I have as much zest in everything else as ever, therefore of course I wish it over. I felt it in my journey to Hungary in 1860, but I attributed it to the country; now I see it is in myself. Inns are especially odious to me.

To Mrs. Gaskell.

Paris, December 28, 1864.

DEAR FRIEND,

Delighted was I to get your letter just now. I got the numbers long ago and read the story in two days (such a treat!), and sent it to poor Anna, who is most thankful.

I have been ill and am still ill. I knew you were very busy or poorly, or both, and was sorry; but it never came into my head that you were in fault; all I feared for was your promised visit. However, half February is better than no February—I mean on account of the people who are here; they generally stay till end of March, but by no means always. It is extraordinary how many people come and ask me for M. or Madame So-and-so, and seem greatly astonished and disappointed at not seeing them, because they never seem to think that any one lives anywhere but in Paris; whereas so many come but for two months. It was not so some years ago; six and

eight months at Paris were ordinary, but living is so much dearer now. They never will understand that this man has destroyed Parisian life, and that the very things they admire are what has destroyed it, viz. the great show-offishness of everything.

What a gossiping we'll have, shan't we?

I have this very evening read the last number of the *Cornhill*, and am as pleased as ever. The Hamleys are delightful, and Mrs. Gibson!—oh, the tricks are delicious; but I am not up to Cynthia yet. Molly is the best heroine you have had yet. Every one says it's the best thing you ever did. Don't hurry it up at the last; that's a rock you must not split on.

The Queen of Holland goes to London, and writes to Mr. Mohl to send her letters to Florence, to Lady Augusta, to Mrs. Grote. I think I must persuade Lady Augusta to ask the two Majesties to come and take a dish of tea. Would not that be high fun? and should not I be a cubit taller in my family if I was one of the party?

Paris, March 7, 1865.

DEAR MINNIE,*

Don't be disgusted at this shabby note, written in gratitude for yours from Roehampton. I am cured, they say, but so weak, so thin, so languid, and often incapable, that you would not be indignant if you saw me at my not answering your kind letter sooner. I am at times so merry that you'd think I was capable of anything, but that's *mind*. I'm glad I'm not dead; but then sometimes the body gets the uppermost, and I can do nothing but lie on the sofa and read old books. . . .

I hope you won't give up your translations to keep house; though housekeeping is very laudable, the other's your best friend. One's pursuit always is; it sticks so close to one. No disparagement to the connubial tie, which I greatly esteem, but I have observed *that* is improved by not being the only occupation in life; it is then all *agrément* when one don't make it the sole stick to lean upon. I'm glad to hear you're so quiet in the day; you'll work naturally.

Mrs. X—— came when I was very ill and very cross, so I said I had no Fridays, which was not quite exact, because, though I

* Written after my marriage.

remained in bed, Mr. Mohl received. But I was rampageous with desperation because my family would not send me the niece I wanted, but sent me one I did not want. So it all fell on Mrs. X——'s devoted head!

Paris, May 18, 1865.

It is so long since I have heard from you that I forget if I answered your last, but I do know that you had a great calamity in the sudden loss of your uncle,* which I intended to write about, but did not, for the simple reason that such letters, just to say one sympathizes, are only painful; they keep alive the excitement of affliction, and if the pain is a little quieted, they stir it up again—at least, I have found it so. The expressions of regret of those who have not known those one loses are mere reflections; they are kind but not deep, and they have always worried me.

With your father it was different; he was the kindest male friend I had in London. He never made a *talking*, but was always *doing* some underhand, sly kindness; so I had no need to reflect *your* feelings—I had plenty of my own.

I have been very ill four months; keeping my bed part of the time, seeing no one. I have been cured these last two months, but have small strength. Mrs. Gaskell stayed with us from March 12 to April 20. I enjoyed her much; but the heat was so great the last ten days she was ill and glad to go.

I am now under the expected stroke of a great misfortune. My dear Miss Carter I may never see again. For twenty-five years our friendship never paused. I can't bear to think of it. The doctors say there is no hope; but I go on thinking they may be mistaken. I wrote to ask if I should be a plague to the family if I went over and took a lodging next door, that I might see her when she liked. Florence's answer is, "Don't come; you could not see her. She could not even be told you are there, as it might agitate her. She may not read any letters, she is so weak." As I know what a torment over-zealous friends are, I have kept quiet; but it's a hard thing never to see her again. Oh, she was such a sweet creature! I don't enjoy the idea of going to London as I do in general. When I do go, I shall go and see you, of course, in your *ménage*. It will scarcely be before a month, unless Hilly should wish to see me.

* My uncle, Edward Senior, was run over by a railway train in March, 1865.

Pray give my kindest regards to Mrs. Senior, and tell me whether you fit nicely into your mammaship;* I should like it, being absurdly fond of children. Read in the *Edinburgh* "Madame Roland." It is by Madame de Peyronnet, and very good—the best in the number. I did not tell Reeve so when he was here, because I had not read it.

If your love of repose permits you to go to the Exhibition, will you tell me if the "Babes in the Wood"† cuts any figure there? I fear not. My advice would have been, "Don't send anything unless you can send something which shows your peculiar individual talent." She, the Colonna, has sent to the Exhibition here a bust of a Gorgon, which I think beautiful, and the public thinks so too. That is the sort of thing I should have wished her to do for London, because no one could do the same; it has such success here that she has sold three other duplicates. She is all the fashion, and enjoys it very naturally; but being the fashion don't improve any one—it injures some for life; it has not done that as yet. Did you see M. de Circourt?

Do pray tell me if Story has sent his "Saul" to England, and if there is any good thing of Watts or Millais? Have you seen the "Flûte Enchantée"? The Miolan sings it enchantingly, better than she ever did anything. How is Grota? If you see her, tell me if I am in disgrace, that I may get out of it.

Ever, dearest Minnie, yours,
M. M.

The Duchess Colonna was a widow. Before her marriage her name was Mademoiselle d'Affre, a Swiss. After his wife's death M. de Circourt attached himself to her and her mother, and spent the greater part of his time with them in Switzerland. She was very handsome and attractive, full of ability and intelligence. Madame Mohl was very fond of her, and much distressed at her early death.

We had a little house at Roehampton this summer, and Madame Mohl spent a few days with us. She enjoyed greatly driving about the country, and delighted in our little

* She alludes to my stepchildren. † By the Duchess Colonna.

children. It is needless to say how charming she made herself to us all. She had a great sorrow this year in the death of her friend Hilary. No one who reads the following letter can help being struck by its deep and gentle feeling.

Madame Mohl to Miss Emma Weston.

Cold Overton Hall, near Oakham, October 1, 1865.

DEAREST EMMA,

The death of my dear Hilly weighs so heavily on me that I write to you, who knew and valued her, to bring old times to my mind, and to give way to some of the melancholy with which my whole soul is filled by the thoughts of my loss. . . .

In June I came to London and saw her. She was much better, and I indulged in hope, but no one else did. They would let me see her but three times, because everything like emotion hurt her. She never spoke of herself to me as in danger. Her voice and face were so pretty, so sweet, that I bear them in mind as if I had seen an angel. The last time I saw her she kissed me so tenderly. "Clarky dear, you know you are my good mother." Her eyes filled, and I felt I was going to give way, so, arming myself, I said, "Come, come, let us talk of art," a subject always near to us both. I did it because I was told any emotion, however slight, was forbidden. I stayed not long. It was the last I saw of her, though I remained another week in London. I went four times, but I could not see her. She died on September 6, and, strange to say, I did not feel it then as I do now. Her sufferings made me forget everything else; but every day makes me feel it more for my own sake. She was like a guardian angel to me when I arrived in London. I could say everything, the deepest thoughts in my heart, to her, and to her alone. . . .

Two French ladies came some time ago to ask for my name and some money, as the ladies are going to send a testimonial to America of their satisfaction about the deliverance of the slaves, and to send clothes or some such thing which I suspect they don't want; but I was very willing to give my twenty francs to pay the compliment, as I call it, and I greatly rejoice that the issue of all the fighting will be their freedom. Neither do I believe it would ever have come to pass if other angry and dirty passions had not worked the whole nation,

like barm raising up the bread and making at last a good loaf out of the fermentation. Will you tell Mrs. Chapman that in spite of the terrible catastrophe of Lincoln's death, which seemed like the propitiatory sacrifice to Hecate or the infernal powers, I think the war a great success as a large whole? Adieu, dear Emma. I am always the same, even when I don't write.

Yours,

MARY MOHL.

(*Translation.*)

April 1, 1866.

MY DEAR CHILD,

I am going to regale myself with beginning a letter to you, though I know I shall not be able to finish it at once. . . .

I have a new friend, an Austrian; his name is Plèner. He is twenty-two years old, and he will put into the Ambassador's bag (he is secretary to the Embassy) six numbers of the *Revue Nationale*, and the history of that confounded Bonaparte (God forgive me for swearing!). It delights me, as well as the "Causeries" of Madame de Peyronnet. . . .

Poor M. de Tourguénieff! I am going to regale him with your information about the serfs. These things must be; but serfdom is worse for the master than for the serfs, and this is why the abolition is good. It was the same with slavery.

April 8.

At last our house in the Rue Plumet is let for twenty years. It is an unspeakable relief. . . . I gave a grand dinner on Friday in honour of Lady Georgina Russell, the minister's daughter. She has been staying for the last fortnight with the Tourguénieffs, and at the same time I pleased *them*, for Madame de Tourguénieff has been working night and day, taking her to balls and plays; and she had a rest, as I invited only Fanny and Mrs. Arthur Russell, for I thought four of a family very handsome. The T.'s invite quietly seven from the same house, with five crinolines among them. I would not do this for any one, it is really too much of a good thing. I had those three for ladies, and Montalembert, Lavergne, Jules Simon, Prévost-Paradol, Scherer, the little Austrian Plèner (who looked like a baby with all these people), Dupont White, Arthur Russell. It went off beautifully. The little Lady G. is very nice, without any pretension, frank and

pleasant, and charmed with everything. She said she would tell "papa" all about it. She was finely astonished when she heard Simon and Montalembert talking across the table of the Government; she could not get over it. She is very intelligent. All the world and his wife came in the evening, among others Max Müller. I hope that M. Helmholtz will not be disappointed when he comes. That happens so often. People have such exaggerated ideas of the charms of Paris, which are much greater when one understands the easy ways of society than they appear at first sight. I have invited an Oxford professor to meet him at breakfast. I would ask Max Müller, but he is going away to-morrow morning. I shall ask Laugel, because he makes a great talk about Helmholtz.

Every one says that Patti's lame sister has a more beautiful voice than she has. I don't think much of Patti's voice. It is fresh, but the quality (*timbre*) has no charm. However, nothing is so rare as a fine *timbre*, and no one ever thinks about it; nevertheless, it is the most important of all. It is the quality of the instrument; but there is so little real taste for music that people care only for the work bestowed on the instrument. Goethe says exactly what I think about it in his conversations with Eckerman. I read them this summer in French; they pleased me much. Goethe cared little for this learned German music.

Madame H—— still regrets her first husband as much as ever. The second is melancholy and hypochondriacal. What a contrast! She is very good to him, but there is no longer a god in the temple. Adieu, dear child. May God preserve your health, and that of all whom you love. Every other grief is a mere trifle compared with those that touch our affections. However, it is a great blessing to be rid of our Rue Plumet.

I saw yesterday young B——; he thanked me for the letters I gave him eight years ago for London. I had forgotten my letters and his face, but I was as polite as possible. Do you remember that, because in old times I was kind to him, the gossips of Heidelberg thought that I was making up a match between him and Anna? It seems they don't know that in Paris a hostess does the agreeable from habit, and without any sort of design. B—— has brought a friend. They have been here three days, and the other one has changed his hotel three times. This gentleman is difficult to please. The two had only one room, containing a bed and a sofa. They drew lots for

the bed, and B—— won. The other one was much longer than the sofa, and he says he was obliged to lie like a dog, so he got up at daylight and found another hotel. The story is fit for *Punch;* but they take it all very seriously. Adieu, dear child. Read Beugnot's "Memoirs;" they are very amusing.

Yours,

M. M.

May 15, 1866.

DEAR MINNIE,

I wish you joy of this great happiness! * Thank you for asking your aunt to write. I took it very kindly that you should think of anybody after such an acquisition.

I come from a *messe de mariage* of the daughter of O——. Now it turns out that I had fully intended to make a match between the bridegroom and a particular friend of mine, so I am as vexed as possible. He is a perfect jewel. If I had known him before I was married I should have done some basenesses; but he has gone and married a half-Pole. Now, Poles are my aversion, founded on long practice. She is not disagreeable; it's a love-match on his part. I wish I was not subject to these aversions. I have done what I could to get rid of them.

I saw "Don Juan" at the Great Opera Saturday. The ballet is the only one I have ever liked; it is beautiful. Faure, the actor who does "Don Juan," is the only one I ever saw who made all his feats probable. People think of nothing but this probable war, which has paralyzed everything; the very pastrycooks declare they sell no cakes. I don't believe it has such an effect in England, though the failures are enormous. It is wonderful to me that mankind are such intense fools they can't or won't declare they will not have a war that ruins everybody. Even of those asses the Italians, when I was in Italy all the most sensible said, "What we want is to be at peace; not to increase our territory, but to organize that which we have; and the greatest misfortune is the acquisition of Naples, because no one knows how to frame laws for all Italy. And we are, madame, head-over-ears in debt."

* The birth of my daughter.

To Miss Emma Weston.

Cold Overton Hall, near Oakham, July 29, 1866.

DEAREST EMMA,

I came here the 26th, overdone with hurry, and the quiet here seems like being buried—not that I find fault with it; when once I have fallen into the habit of close application I shall delight in it, the more that I was in a state of awful irritation at the nonsense I heard about politics. . . . Read two articles in the 1st and 15th *Fortnightly Review* on Bismarck. They are written by a German, who knows better than most people all about him. Pray, dearest Emma, write me a line if you get this, to tell me where you are, and how you like Scotland. It is nothing without your imagination. The bare hills would be only bare hills but for Scott and Burns, and all they have put into it; and that is why I love it. It is the country of mind—like a face full of expression, whose mere material part would be nothing were it not for the mind and soul that come out at every look.

To Lady William Russell.

Cold Overton, August 3, 1866.

A thousand thanks, dearest miladi, for yours. I had written to Arthur, being out of all patience at not hearing. I'm sure I don't know why I write to you now, for I have nothing amusing to say. This is a place where all one's inward resources must be called out from their deepest recesses, or mental life stops short. I read and write all day, ride on horseback with the children, and grow fat on it. You need not wonder that I read Plato quickly. I have brought with me two volumes of a very amusing journey across Arabia, by one William Gifford Palgrave; he is not merely a traveller. Some parts of it are as amusing as "Robinson Crusoe;" besides which, his account of the Wahabees is so curious: they have their prototypes here, and I have no doubt it was the English Wahabees made him a Catholic. Now he has taken a walk back, not into Protestantism (no, no, thank you for nothing), but into Christianity. Don't be shocked, but I think neither Catholics nor Protestants are exactly Christians. I said so one day to a young man, and to my surprise it created a friendship between us. His name is Brandis. Do you know him? He is secretary to the Queen of Prussia; an odd position *pour faire de telles études.*

Ida writes to me from Vienna that the newspapers there contain constant ill-natured things—sneerings, etc., about the Queen of Holland. Can you understand that? Is it because of her Bonapartism? But that Vienna Government is something that out-Herods Herod in its love of stupidity; and yet one is reduced to hoping it will not be outwitted by Prussia and L. N.

Pray write *per carità.*

Yours devotedly,

M. MOHL.

P.S.—I get some old books. I am reading Shakespeare and Zeluco. Did you ever read this latter? I am very fond of it.

Madame Mohl was looking forward to the great pleasure of receiving her niece Ida with her husband and children. The visit was deferred to the spring of 1867, and Madame Mohl seems to have resented the postponement, and then, as usual, repented of her petulance.

(*Translation.*)

December 1, 1866.

MA CHÈRE PETITE,

I send you a letter which I began yesterday, to show you how little I was aware that I gave you pain (I have this instant received your last). I never had such an intention. I never meant to scold you; but you know my temper. I am not gentle, I never was, the vivacity which I cannot help, and which keeps all round me alive, is, perhaps, too dearly paid for by this want of padding, which causes me to rub against others without intending it; but we have the temper which nature gives us, just as we have the children that nature gives us. You will see that I have quite given up the plan I fixed of your coming in December. I was so afraid of the cold in January for the baby; and then to come for less than three months seems to me absurd. In December the climate is often very mild. This was my reason; but I assure you that, as far as I am concerned, it is all the same. I am not sure when the Exhibition will open. L. N. is so mad that one can never be sure of anything. . . .

But, my dear child, never think that when I preach to you not to sacrifice yourself to your husband and child I am angry with you.

You are like Hilly; you are always forgetting yourself, and this annoys me. Such people are eaten up by others, who turn into cannibals in spite of themselves. But pray banish from your mind that I was angry with you; it's my way—that's all. I send you three hundred francs for your journey.

(*Translation.*)

Paris, December 21, 1866.

MY DEAR CHILD,

Your uncle is working unceasingly in the hope of finishing enough of the "Shah Nameh" to figure in the Exhibition, so as to gratify the national vanity. It is wonderful what a powerful lever this vanity is; and it is one great argument against huge empires like Russia. To extinguish an Englishman by doing better than he, a Frenchman would submit to tortures; but an inhabitant of the centre of Russia has not this stimulus against another in St. Petersburg, and I have no doubt that one of the causes of the gradual decline in civilization of the Roman empire was their contempt for what they called "barbarians," whereas the small Italian states were devoured with envy of each other in the Middle Ages, so that when one town built a church the neighbouring city hastened to do the same, and this rivalry was the source of the great works in painting, sculpture, and architecture which to this day make Italy the museum of Europe. The great Austrian empire has inherited the self-satisfaction of the Roman empire, and in consequence has done little in this respect.

There is general uneasiness in France, and the people at the Bourse say that this state of things cannot last. The Péreires pay no dividend this year for the *crédit mobilier*. Louis Napoleon is beginning to be no longer considered a profound genius. The vulgar in every country have a false idea that when a single man calculates on the evil passions of others, cultivates and turns them to his own advantage, he must be a profound genius, whilst, on the contrary, he shows himself to be superficial, common, and wanting in penetration.

E—— is not much to my taste, but I can endure him. He has a mania for coming between half-past ten and eleven, and when Mr. Mohl tells him it is too late, and takes him into his den, the next time he comes at 8.30, just as I am dressing to go out, and this seems to offend him. I have noticed that the Germans are genera

annoyed with the women here because we do not put ourselves out for them. The article *man* is no rarity. I have my days for reception—let him come then. I said to him very coolly, "No, I cannot have you to dine, because I sleep after dinner, and you would put me out," for he offered to come without ceremony and ask for some dinner. Only from Barthélemy (and he would not do it) could I bear that. I am making great arrangements. I do not let your uncle know all about them; but he suspects something. When it is all settled I will tell him how I intend to place everybody, and at the same time clear his room, which is in a frightful mess.

Margy has gone away twice as well as when she came, thanks to M. Liebreich. Ah, what a man is Liebreich! I never met any one to be compared with him. How I should like to marry him! but this is impossible. He might be my son, and he has a wife and I have a husband. Too many events would be necessary. In the mean while you shall make his acquaintance. He lived with Helmholtz for ten years. He is incomparable! Adieu, dear child. I am in high spirits, but I can't tell why. The little L. is so naughty that his father's friends conspire against him just as they do against Louis Napoleon. Adieu.

M. MOHL.

(*Translation.*)

Paris, January 3, 1867.

MY DEAR CHILD,

I was becoming uneasy about you when I received your letter just this instant, and I read it to your uncle. It is the first revelation he has had of our plan in its full maturity. He said nothing, so I inquired, "Are you not pleased?" "I must go and bury that creature," was all he said, and off he went. Here is the explanation. Madame X—— is dead, and is to be buried at twelve o'clock. He must go to the church. There are four inches of snow in the garden. He anathematizes X—— now she is dead, as he did while she was alive.

I make some little arrangement for you every day, and I think you will be comfortable. The chicks may have the dining-room for their nursery. Their prattle in German will not disturb me as it would if I could understand them.

Mr. and Mrs. Lewes have been to dine and breakfast here. She is the George Eliot who wrote "Adam Bede." We are excellent friends. Adieu.

CHAPTER XI.

1867–1869

Cousin's death—His mission—His will—Mignet—Barthélemy—Visitors during the Exhibition—Nandor—French marriages—Emperor of Russia's popularity—Love for living—English girls—Cats and lambs—German handwriting—Flirtations—Ardent friendships—French bourgeoises—Mrs. Frewen Turner's accident—Queen of Holland's visit—Stors—Madame de Boufflers—Dull evening—Thiers—Spurious letters of Pascal and Newton—Emperor of Austria—Power of attention—Schools—Selfishness in youth—Education in America—Energy of Madame Mollien—Berryer and Guizot—M. Doudan—English Sunday—Importance of speaking French—Evils of awkwardness—Love for sister—Absurdity and selfishness of English fathers—A "dot" necessary—Old and new fashioned love-making in England—Mistake to cultivate bores—Senior's "Ireland"—Prévost-Paradol—Visit to Rome.

To Lady Augusta Stanley.

January 25, 1867 (alas!).

DEAR LADY AUGUSTA,

How long it is since I have written! but I am well punished by getting no letter, though your last gave me *such* pleasure. I was delighted the little clock had such success, but I am quite certain the infinite grace with which you gave it, and which you are not aware of, luckily, doubled the *agrément*. Ask Arthur if what I say is not true.

We have got through the winter wonderfully well; *I*, especially, have no more traces of my bitter enemy's former *acharnement*. I have found out at last how to keep him off. My spouse is busy getting the "Shah Nameh" ready for the great plaything which so fills the head of our august fool and baby that he will get himself knocked off, I believe, before he sees the hurricane come on. However, the toyshop will have its fling, and although I have been intending to write for a long time, it is that which now puts pen in

hand. I want you to tell me at what time Miss Mary Grant * can come to me, because I exercise as much modest hospitality as I can on this occasion, and I shall have a succession of young ladies in your room—it's *your* room and Barthélemy's. He has had it for ten months, whenever he came to town, once a week, sometimes for two or three nights. It was a great pleasure to us and a great convenience to him. He came back this day week with the body of Cousin in his coffin. He travelled in that awful frost and snow, and suffered much, being fifty hours on the road, which was stopped up by snow. Cousin was buried Thursday. Mr. Mohl was struck with the great sensation the loss has created at a time of such universal apathy. They have vividly remembered that he was the introducer into France of a higher and nobler philosophy; that by raising the mind from the materialist view to the spiritualist in 1818, when no mortal had a suspicion of such a change, he has been the prime cause of a whole new system of ideas. His will is worthy of the great mission he fulfilled. He has left nearly £800 a year, to the astonishment of every one, and a magnificent library to the Sorbonne, for the use of philosophy only, which must have cost at least 800,000 francs. About £10,000 goes to the foundation of a librarian and an under librarian (*garcon de salle*), to the *entretien* and buying new books (on philosophy). Barthélemy is head librarian with £140 a year, and Cousin has left him, Mignet, and a notary friend the residuary legatees of all the rest, barring some legacies. Mignet and Barthélemy never had the slightest hint that he intended to make them independent in their old age. Barthélemy was in terror lest he should be blind and poor. Mignet, too, might have been dependent on Thiers. Mignet made me cry the other day when we were alone, with the few and solemn deep words which expressed his dear feelings. I need say nothing of Barthélemy; you know what a creature he is. I thank God more often than I can say for having blessed me with the intimacy of such fine minds as I have enjoyed and housed in my mind. You and Arthur are in good company, I assure you.

My reason for wanting to know soon *à peu près* when Miss Grant will come, is that she may have the choice of the time. One person must have it, and I shall then propose to another and get her answer, and to another, and so on. In the year '55 I asked at

* Lady Augusta's niece, a very remarkable sculptor.

least six or seven persons. Every one *would* come at the same time. I had less room than now, and my room was empty almost always, as they would not make up their minds to tell me when I asked them, or to come at my time. This time I begin early to avoid the same.

With best remembrances to Arthur, I remain, dearest love, yours ever,

MARY MOHL.

Madame von Schmidt's visit was all too short to please her aunt, who persuaded her to leave her elder child, Nandor, in Paris. He was sent to a famous school, Ste. Barbe, but Madame Mohl had him over continually to the Rue du Bac. She wrote constant letters to his mother, full of her tender care for the child and her plans for his improvement.

(*Translation.*)

May 24, 1867.

DEAR CHILD,

Your uncle tells me that I have not written to you for a long time. The truth is I have been so busy with Madame Belloc's affairs. . . .

Barthélemy is afraid of his eyes; he is obliged to go to live in the country at Meaux. He is terribly grieved at going away, and I have offered him your room whenever he comes to town. This will be a little alleviation for him, and for me it is a great pleasure to be able to offer it.

Everything is going down here, and the money we have invested in Italy and Spain gives no interest, and the Austrians are such fools that I am afraid they will let themselves be beaten again. It is this wretch of ours who has hatched all this. One of his reasons is that he does not want to bring back his troops from Rome, in order to please the clerical party. In England they begin to see this, and even the Italians to suspect he is cheating them. At last the party of order understands this. As for the demagogues and Garibaldi, I believe they are well pleased. . . .

Good heavens! what things I have heard to-day about the marriage of Madame C——'s daughter—the one who is dead. You must have heard me speak of her. There are some facts about the

lives of women here which ought to be known and published and cried on the housetops. Only Balzac could have told them so as to be of use, and he was not moral enough to gain attention; but if one does not amuse the public one is not listened to either. In short, I cannot explain myself. The law ought to interfere, as parents are so stupid about marrying their children. If ever I see you again I will tell you all about it; it is impossible to write.

By the French law any one may translate an English book without paying anything to the author a year after the original is published. Is it the same in Germany, and did your translation of "Sylvia's Lovers" sell well?

June 6, 1867.

Paris has gone quite mad. The Emperor of Russia has turned everything topsy-turvy; the *toyshop* has produced the desired effect —kings come to see it. The emperor went to the Grande Duchesse the very evening of his arrival to see Mademoiselle Schneider dance the *cancan*. Now it seems that I saw her dance it a week ago, and it did not strike me as at all improper. Mérimée told me it was the *cancan*. I went to see him yesterday evening; he was much better than when you were here, and very charming.

June 3 (cold and rainy, sitting over the fire).

DEAREST MINNIE,

Your letter quite cheered me. I shall go to London, please the pigs, but I can't say when, because it is so cold that I have put off my journey till the latter end of June. Lady Augusta made a sort of engagement with me when she was here, but I can't make up my mind to move. I'm grown old, my dear, though I fight the good fight against it, and hold high my banner, and run up and downstairs like a lamplighter. I am only weak, and that is a great bore. I am no more fit to die than to command a fleet, just because I don't like it; I'm ridiculously and basely fond of living.

Your letter is a masterpiece about the girls' lives in England, and ought to be printed. I was always an arrant coquette, whether in France or England, and am sorry to say the only wise thing is to be a coquette in youth, because it is the only means of self-defence. I think those who are *not* are much gooder; but if I was born an animal and consulted beforehand, I should choose not to be a lamb but a cat, with good claws to defend myself. But the men have less

heart in England than elsewhere, and are great fools in judging women. Now, I have had some pretty sharp practice all my life in English, French, German, and Italian, and know more of the men folk than most women. I had five admirers at a time once, and could compare, besides seeing more men than women all my youth. I have a strong sense of justice on the subject, and much tenderness for my own poor sex. Ah! I knew a sweet creature, so much better than I was, who almost died of a broken heart for some vile man who paid great attention to her, and married some one else, as inferior! They have no more discernment than conscience; but I'm happy to see they are often well punished by being lowered to the dimensions of commonplace women.

Adieu. I have a hundred things more to say, but no time at present.

Yours ever,
M. M.

(*Translation.*)

Wednesday, June 12, 1867.

MY DEAR CHILD,

I have just received your letter. The little boy had left me an hour before; his uncle took him to school on his way to the Collége de France. I am so pleased with him. As for being well-behaved, he is charming. I will go and see him before he comes here again. The poor child cannot read your letters, nor can I when they are written in the German character; if they were written in the Roman handwriting I could read them to him, for I pronounce well enough for him to understand. But, my dear child, how is it that you do not reflect that this character which the Germans have adopted is like Sanskrit for the rest of Europe, even when one knows German? Have you not heard your uncle say a hundred times that at the Institut he is often forced to waste hours in deciphering letters from German *savants*, and prize compositions? Remember that all Europe uses the Roman character. The consequence is that as your uncle has not always time to spare, these letters and compositions are often never read at all.

That lover of mine who gave me the tunes you used to play, taught me to write your character, and as I could draw I learnt in four days, but I could not read my own writing; and when I complained and said, "What nonsense not to write like other Europeans!" he replied,

"So much the worse for the other Europeans." It was so much the worse for *him*, for I refused to marry such an obstinate fellow, and he nearly died of grief.

Paris, July 16, 1867.

DEAREST MILADI,

I was as delighted with your last as in days of yore I have been after a *raccommodement* with a lover. Don't be shocked; I married late, and was rather given to sentimental flirtations for a good many years—"mais tous pour le bon motif;" only somehow or other such affairs go off, sometimes for one reason, sometimes for another, and I had a great many experiences in that line. But my friends gain by it; for, having a proper esteem for the sacrament (of marriage), besides having by degrees grown old, I have transferred all my old habit of sentiment into friendships, and by long habit I suppose they have kept a resemblance to their troublesome brothers in being very ardent.

The Emperor of Russia is gone. While he was here there was no peace, nor no coach to be had, the whole town cared for nothing else. M. Brandis, a very taking person, asked Mr. Mohl what the French said of the King of Prussia and Bismarck. He was obliged to say that he had never heard any one speak of them, they were so entirely absorbed by the Emperor of Russia. I think his chief charm was that he telegraphed from Cologne to get a box to see the Grande Duchesse de Gerolstein (aux Variétés) dance the *cancan* with her prime minister and général en chef—a burlesque on the German court, very much tasted, I dare say, by the Russians, but it ought not to be tasted by the Emperor of Russia, as his grandmother or great-grandmother, the Empress Catherine, made love to the soldiers; and so does the Grande Duchesse, to one in particular. It's very amusing, and Mrs. Bruce and I saw the *cancan* danced without the slightest suspicion that it was improper. The emperor also went to Mabille in spite of all that could be said about the proprieties, and though the Parisians pretended to be shocked, I believe it was these *inconvenances* that made him so popular. None of the crowned heads made the slightest inquiries about any of the good things here except our English Princess of Prussia. She went to the schools, inquired about the scientifics. M. Brandis asked Mr. Mohl to go and see the princess by her order. She was extremely curious about

Oriental matters, and he thought her very intelligent. Then she asked much about how they managed to employ women so much more here than they do in England. The fact is that there is a most striking difference between the two countries. The women keep *almost* all the accounts in the shops; they kept them all till these monster shops were set up. It was always the wife and daughter, and still is in the general way. It makes them very practical and sensible, and as different as possible from an English tradesman's wife, who generally sets up for a half-lady.

After her annual visit to London she wrote from Cold Overton—

Cold Overton, August 7, 1867.

DEAREST MILADI,

I should have written long ago had I not been in trouble. I found my dear sister, whom I love better than any one in the world, had fallen down a week before my arrival, and though the bone is not broken (at least so the country surgeon says) the muscles of the thigh were so stretched and lacerated that the pain for days was dreadful. One of her sons was with her, but she forbade his writing to any one. Her nerves were so *agacés* she could not bear any human face, and my coming down was discouraged under pretence of change of servants. I only learnt it when I came. However, she was rather quieter than she had been, and was glad to see me. It is now a full fortnight, and we now hope that she may get through it. My dear sister is considerably older than I am, I never spend a year, happen what may, without coming to her, always in a fright lest it may be the last. You may suppose, therefore, the trouble I have been in; for though my husband has a much greater place in my life, though he is my best friend and an incomparable companion, I have an indescribable tenderness for her that I have for no one else, nor ever had except for my mother. Yet she is much fonder of her sons than of me, and in fact I am but a very secondary person in her life. It's odd, but it's true, nevertheless.

Yours,
M. MOHL.

Mrs. Frewen Turner, although she lived to a very great age, never walked again. Miss Martin writes—

If you mention my dear granny, I wish you would put in a few words to testify to her beautiful character. She lived to do good to others. In 1852, when our mother died, she gave up her own comfortable home to take care of us and my father's house, which she did for eight years, till he married again. She had done the same before for her eldest son, but he was a widower only three years. Both the Frewen and Martin children were constantly with her, and made Cold Overton their second home. Naturally very energetic and independent, her accident and enforced inactivity were most trying to her, and the necessity of asking help from others every time she required anything was more irksome to her than to most people, but she bore it most beautifully. She always had some one sleeping in her room, and I used to take my turn with the others, getting her a cup of tea, keeping up her fire, etc. She lived like this till March 19, 1879, her ninety-fourth year, outliving all her children, but to the end retaining her faculties perfectly, and often forgetting to put on her spectacles when reading.

The following letters describe the Queen of Holland's visit to the Rue du Bac, which has been confounded with that of Queen Victoria to the deanery.

To Miss E. Martin.

Rue du Bac, October 7 or 8, 1867.

The next day, Saturday, I set to to dust all my best books in the little bookcase in the little room. I had on my old blue silk gown, now on its last legs, with a few rents in it, a large apron and a duster, luckily no *papillotes*, and a *not very* scandalous cap, no carpet, and the house abominable, when Julie banged open the door and announced the Queen of Holland. I would not have minded her a pin, but a perfect dandy of a chamberlain and her maid of honour were really plagues, especially the gentleman. However, they all sat down, and her Majesty graciously said that as I would not come and see her she came to see me. I'm afraid I behaved very ungraciously, for I said I did not know she was in Paris, as I had only just arrived. They stayed half an hour, and she was all politeness, and told Mr. Mohl in the ante-room that the Queen (*our* Queen) had told her she went on

purpose to Mrs. Clark's* with the idea of seeing me. Now, that is very civil and gracious of our Queen, though very odd, because if she had sent me word I should have been greatly honoured to be wherever she pleased to order me to be. But I believe she liked the fun of going a-larking, and thinking that if I were there I should amuse her; but she would not make a prim affair of it. They all like accidents, because they get so few. So if Margy had stayed another day she would have seen the Queen of Holland. Whatever folk were in the house were on the stairs to see her. Margy will tell you the state of the house and court-yard; such a mess! But she is *incog.* here, and goes every day to the Exhibition. She is not at the Tuileries, so I shall go with Mr. Mohl, Tuesday, to pay my respects.

I have been reading the "Memoirs" of Count Beugnot, and I'm sure it is translated. I think if your papa could get it from Leicester it might amuse your grandmamma. Josephine, my old friend, knew him when she was a girl. He lived at Bar-sur-Aube, and was intimate with her father. His daughter was her playfellow—two or three years older—and a great lady under Bonaparte. Her husband, a general, was governor of the Invalides. It is very entertaining—his youth, about the Revolution; then he was employed by Bonaparte; and after that by the Bourbons. All the state of France, when Boney was beat out of Germany, and the anecdotes of Boney, will, I think, amuse your grandmamma.

The letter to her German niece is almost a repetition, except the last paragraph.

To Madame von Schmidt.

(*Translation.*)

When the Queen of Holland heard that Mr. Mohl had a nephew here she asked to see him. He had two slices of bread and jam on a plate, and had to put it down before he came. She spoke German to him, and he replied in the same language. She had hoped to hear him speak Swabian. The Swabian *patois* to her is like Scotch to me —quite irresistible, and I can understand the magic which lies in it.

* The Queen was in the habit of going to see Lady Clark at Bagshot, and one day Madame Mohl happened to come at the same time, and the Queen desired to see her. This was after her Majesty's visit to the deanery in 1864.

To Lady William Russell.

Rue du Bac, October, 1867.

DEAREST MILADI,

It is so long since *notre commerce* has been suspended that I have lost the thread. I shall therefore make a great knot, and take it up as I can, without pretending to be graceful. I have only returned to my *pénates* very lately, having been twice to a very agreeable country house near L'Isle Adam, where *trônait "l'Idole,"* Madame de Boufflers, whom Madame du Deffand talks so much about. The house is called Stors, but I learnt there that Madame de Boufflers was not the real idol of the Prince de Conti, but a beauty whose name I forget, but whose picture, done at the time, dressed as a knight in full armour, figures in the *salon* of my friends; and very beautiful she is. Stors belonged to the prince, but she inhabited it; and the tradition is that she used to give him *des coups de cravache*, and that he was all the more in love with her.

Visiting in a French country house is more convenient to me than in an English one, because every one has their tea or coffee brought into their own room at their own hour, and they need not appear till 11.30, at the *déjeuner*, which is really luncheon, and one dines at 6.30. These hours suit me better, and dress is much kept under. No one is *décolletée* in the evening as in England.

The day before we went the Queen of Holland deigned to come up my stairs. I was dusting my books in an apron; and they were all on the ground. I did not mind her, for she don't care; but there was a French dandy, aide-de-camp to L. N., who looked much astonished, and whom I could have dispensed with. She asked to come some evening to meet M. Thiers. Lady Augusta and her spouse were to come ten days after, and I waited for them, and asked Mignet, Barthélemy, Prévost-Paradol, and Léon Say; but it did not go off well, and a luncheon is better to make people talk. M. Thiers was, I thought, very tiresome, he gave a long lecture on the quarrel now going on at the Institut between a great *géomètre* and *algébriste*, Schale, who has bought a whole cargo of letters, which every one believes to be forgeries except himself and Thiers. Brewster has taken it up, and has all the Institut on his side against Schale. They are chiefly letters of Newton's (Sir Isaac) to Pascal, and answers of Pascal; and though

it seems that they are not in Newton's hand, and are in French, which he did not write, still Thiers maintains they are his; and all to prove that Newton did not find out attraction, but that it was Pascal. I am happy to say all the *savants* say Schale has been hoaxed, and Thiers, who began to study astronomy, etc., at seventy, maintains it's all true. Also Pascal's letters are not in his style. There's a letter of Louis XIV., which sets everybody laughing, it's so unlike him; and one of Charles V. of Austria to Rabelais, which is more absurd still. And this Schale, who is a most respectable man and mathematician, who always was as meek as a lamb, gets quite furious about it. I thought Thiers quite silly; but her Majesty told Mr. Mohl she had been greatly amused, although she did not agree with him. He talked the greatest nonsense you ever heard; and such a thing is reputation that all listened and said nothing. I could have thumped my spouse with great pleasure for not taking it up. I went to see her Majesty yesterday (of course by invitation). She was to leave this morning. There was only Madame Cornu.

(*Translation.*)

Paris, October 30, 1867.

MY DEAR IDA,

I went to the Chevreux, at Stors, on the 9th with your uncle. We returned on the 14th. On the 16th Lady Augusta and her husband came, and you may think how busy I was during the week they spent here, all the more that the Queen of Holland, who came to see me in September, before my visit to Stors, asked me to arrange an evening for her. I was obliged to look up the few people now here whom I thought she would find agreeable—M. Thiers at the head of them. The party came off on the 18th, and was very dull; breakfasts are much better. Lady Augusta wished to stay upstairs on account of her brother's death; but the queen declared she would go up to see her, so Augusta came down and remained with us. Arthur said he was very glad to bring her here to distract her thoughts from the extreme sadness of this death. I dare say she was better here than in London; but, after all, it is a terrible thing, when one's heart is breaking, to be in company. They went away on the 23rd, and I am beginning to collect my thoughts and arrange my house, for we have had people almost always for the last thirteen months. . . .

Thank Heaven the Exhibition will soon be closed; the town is intolerable; there are no cabs to be had; one cannot get about, and with all this the poor are suffering terribly from want; the manufacturers are ruined; bread has risen to a fancy price; the town is so deeply in debt that the madness of the Government is inexplicable, and every one says that it cannot last. Those who formerly held their tongues talk of a revolution as inevitable. God grant it! for this man is out of his senses—and the sooner the better, before he has squandered and ruined everything. . . .

Your emperor produced a very fine impression here; he was well received. Maximilian's death was in every one's thoughts. There were some fellows at the Review paid for crying, "Long live the Emperor Napoleon!" and I dare say he was taken in by them. Your emperor looked so elegant, so handsome, by the side of this *Bonapartasserie*, that every one was struck by the contrast; and the mob likes good looks.

December 1, 1867.

I fetched the little one yesterday, and took him to Madame Boissier, thence to the Val de Grâce, and on the way thence to Madame Tastu; the fact is that when he is here I can do nothing, so I go out visiting and take him with me. He screamed with joy on seeing your letter; he laughed, and was delighted to hear it read; then he burst into tears. He is a child full of heart—of this I am convinced, and I have always said so. I have found a way of fixing his attention. I give him a card for each word that he reads well and without hesitating. I tell him to look at it well first, for if he does not read it properly he will not gain the cards; but if he gains them all I will buy him a plaything. I am sure that if I had him for three months he would read easily; but I should die of it. Do not suppose that I think any the worse of him for this. He would work well and willingly if some woman were to put all her energy, cleverness, and tact into the effort of teaching him. M—— G—— says that Ste. Barbe is excellent for teaching habits of obedience, etc., but not for teaching to read; only a woman can do this. The fact is that if there were no schools the whole of the grown-up population would be either killed or extinguished, and if schools have only a moderate number of faults we ought to be very glad of their existence.

. . . . . .

The brain has a sort of muscular force. I say a *sort*—I do not mean to say that it is physical. I abhor everything which in any way leads to materialism, and unfortunately religious bigotry leads to it, because it unspiritualizes religion by adhering to the letter instead of the spirit.

Ottmar has sent me a very attractive young Swiss; but he admires the Prussians! I can understand old people, who have grown selfish and have no enthusiasm, admiring success and despising failure; but youth is the season for generosity and imprudence, for taking the side of the oppressed at all hazards, for abhorring injustice, and risking all to protect the weak. Nowadays it is we old folks who would venture everything to destroy the oppressor. Indulgence for successful cunning and selfish egoism is ten times more disgusting in the young than in the old, and when young people talk in this way I take their measure at once.

I shall send for Nandor on Christmas Day, because it would be too sad for him to be at school, and again on New Year's Day. Next Monday I intend to invite some children to play at Blind-man's Buff, and lunch in the dining-room before I put down the new carpet; therefore think of us on the 22nd, between two and five. I shall invite as many little girls as I can, for he likes nothing so much. I shall have the little Says and the little De Courteils, the little Loménies, and a few others.

I went last night to Mrs. Hollond's; M. de la Boulaye was there, full of talk and very amusing. He told us that during the last few years experiments have been made in America, in certain colleges, to bring up girls and boys in exactly the same way, and their faculties were exactly equal, varying according to the individual, apart from the sex.

To Miss E. Martin.

February 17, 1868.

Mr. Mohl is very well, as he now works in moderation. He goes out about four or five evenings in the week, which I call dissipation, chiefly to the Tourguénieffs' and Madame Mollien's, who is eighty-one. She was couched, as you know, and delighted to see the sun, the sky, everything; but she can't read a great deal, especially as the other eye is not completely gone. She could have but one couched, and so she has set about learning Latin. Now, I call that grand; but she only tells Mr. Mohl, whom she dotes upon, and he is to keep it

a secret, and so am I *here;* but from England and in our family I don't think it will come back, and I tell you as an instance of energy in old age which ought to be blazoned about. She told Mr. Mohl that, as she could not read long and her memory is excellent, she found it very entertaining to learn a language so orderly and, I may say, so well arranged as the Latin; and when she has learnt a bit of grammar she thinks about it, to retain it, which exercises her thoughts; and she can sit and do nothing without fatiguing her only eye, and without poring over the same subject, which one is apt to do when alone, and especially painful ones. She has also great pleasure in finding that already she can understand quotations. She told me one day before she recovered her eye, and when she sat pondering on the past, that her husband, whom she was extremely fond of, had often exhorted her when she was young to learn Latin, and that she regretted extremely not having done it. When she said this to me she had no idea that she would recover her sight. The old folk bring the young ones to shame here just now. Berryer, who has been the finest speaker here, is eighty, and was considered as a little lessened in mind, and was so, but two days ago he flared up again grander than ever. This pretty Government has made a law to put away the judges at seventy on a small pension. Now, judges (what they call here *la magistrature*) are and have been a much-esteemed class these four hundred years, and neither the Revolution (during which many were guillotined) nor even Bonaparte ever lowered their character, though the latter tried hard for it; but L. N. has by various cunning means done more harm than either. The French, even the best, are temptable through their children; so whenever a judge sided with a man whose politics were obnoxious, if he had sons, they were always kept back. For instance, supposing a young lawyer (I know the case) is son of a judge who is obnoxious, if he pleads a cause, whatever it may be, the judges will judge against him, and it soon gets known that this young lawyer never gains a cause; he soon, of course, loses all chance of employment. No one will take a lawyer whom the judges have a prejudice against; he's obliged to give up his profession; and as the sons of judges are apt to be lawyers, the fathers are so vexed at their sons being objects of aversion to the Government, that they do what they can to please the Government. I don't mean to say that they would condemn an innocent man to death; but in cases of the press, for instance, they will

lean to the side of power. Then this horrid law of putting them away at seventy was made to get rid of the old ones, who are the most firm and honest, like M. Reynouard, who will be put on the shelf this year in full possession of the best of his faculties. And Berryer made as beautiful a speech as any in his best days, and *à propos* of treating thus the aged, spoke of M. Guizot, whose newest books are read with greater zeal than his old ones, and took an opportunity of saying that the man who had been minister for years had made so little money that now at eighty he had to write to maintain his family. This is somewhat exaggerated, because the family has enough to live upon; but though the two husbands of the two daughters had a competency, it was not more. The eldest farms M. Guizot's small estate, and makes money by it to live. They have two daughters. The youngest has six children, so that is eight to be provided for; and you know it never comes into the head of a French family not to scrape together a "dot" for the girls. So they live very economically, which M. Berryer, being extravagant, calls absolute poverty. And when the youngest daughter was ordered to winter in Cannes, M. Guizot published the book I gave you, called "A Royal Marriage," to pay for her journey and stay there. Berryer then glanced at the ministers' bench (who have all made large fortunes by all sorts of means not honourable) and said, "How different is this honourable poverty from what we have since seen!" upon which, Guizot being named thus, the whole opposition stood up, and whether they cheered or not I don't know, but they expressed their respect audibly; and his granddaughter, who was there, a girl of sixteen, was so delighted that she wanted to cry out at the top of her voice, "He's my grandpapa!" This was on Friday, and several people came to me who had been there and related it; it was most interesting to hear each in their way. But there were many more incidents which would take me a day to write, because one must explain heaps of things which every one here knows.

Paris, Mardi gras, February 24, 1868.

DEAREST MILADI,

I wish I could show you M. Doudan; the contrast with your ideal red-headed *Figaro* writer would make you laugh. When I saw him thirty years ago he was about twenty-five, or looked so—dark hair, slender figure, rather tall, fine eyes, and the most refined

conversation I have ever known; perfectly natural, and what might have been *un peu précieux* in another was only a grace the more because it was so unconscious; a mind so stored that you never felt you were come to the wall, you felt yourself always *en pleine campagne*, yet with all the soft beauties of a *jardin anglais*. I lost sight of him, and met him again lately. He is not so slender, and his face is different; the mind and talk better than ever; his company is what I call a great luxury. How he came to live with the Broglies I know not. He was with them then, and lives with the old duke now, who is eighty; they seem perfectly wedded to each other. He was the dearest friend of Madame de Broglie. I never knew how it began, but it is an accepted thing by all who know them that he is one of the family, and the old duke would be quite bereaved without him. Albert de Broglie, the eldest son, lives with his father and his four children, all boys—not a woman left. Madame de Staël, the widow of Auguste de Staël, goes every evening to see them when she is able, and I believe the duke goes every afternoon to see her; but she has a *névralgie d'estomac*, and of late has not been able to go. She came one day to me and told me that if I would go of an evening and take Mr. Mohl it would be an acquisition to all these coats (*ces habits noirs*) to have a lady amongst them; for the duke is gouty and cannot go upstairs, M. Doudan (the perfect) fancies himself very ill and unable to stir, and Albert has never got over the loss of his wife, and Madame de Staël can't go anywhere but to her bed, which she came out of, I believe, to make to me this proposal, for she said I should just suit them. And that is the way I have re-found M. Doudan. I expected the house to be very dull, but I find it very cheerful; only, of course, they have not always people in the evening and the duke goes off to sleep now and then, but his mind is just as clear and as good as ever when he wakes. And I find it a great acquisition, being a quarter of an hour's walk. It is the sort of going into company I like—no dress, no invitation. Yours, I believe, is the only house in London where such a thing exists, and it grows very scarce here now.

February 29.

It is five days since I began this, but I shall not put it in the fire as I generally do when I have not sent a letter off. I fear Arthur has gone. Pray, is Odo's *future* fond of music? If she

is, what a delight to have that wonderful voice within reach; and what a waste if she is not! But it is even a gift to have the pleasure I have in hearing such a voice, and I have often wondered you did not make him sing to you every day, which his good nature would have made him consent to if it were to you what it is to me.

There's a scandalous play now acting which, in my opinion, no woman ought to go to, and which, I am convinced, makes half of those who go uncomfortable; yet they all go because it's the fashion. It is called "Paul Forestier." Well may the English cry out against the French if they get wind of it. I won't even read it. All I wonder at is the callousness of people's imaginations; but it all goes down, because it is very clever, they say, and Émile Augier is the cleverest writer they have; but he would not have done it if for twenty years the theatre had not come to this by degrees.

Adieu, dearest Miladi. Pray, pray keep your kind feelings towards me. If appreciating them most highly will help to keep them alive, they will increase instead of diminishing.

(*Translation.*)

Rue du Bac, September 15, 1868.

MY DEAR IDA,

Heaven only knows when I wrote to you, and whether I answered your last, or even your letter before last, for my memory is so bad that it has kept no account. All I know is that I arrived here yesterday almost dead with fatigue, that I left my sister on the 9th, and that I sent this morning for the little fellow, who is here and quite well. As it is Sunday, I don't choose to tease him with reading, for I have observed that everywhere except in England people love Sunday. It is a festival, a day of rejoicing; its gaiety is remembered even in old age; to the religious it is even more delightful. In England every one dislikes the thought of it. I don't mean that people like my sister have this impression; but first, such people are rare; secondly, they think of it with respect, not with pleasure; and I am sure that religion in England would gain 100 per cent. if they could have the French feeling for the day. But all except such sublime characters associate it with recollections of *ennui*, of boredom, of gloom. I have noticed that they scarcely allow themselves to think this, but there is the gloom notwithstanding.

Now, as I wish the child to have none but agreeable ideas connected with God, I shall take care not to give him an unpleasant impression of Sunday. I therefore do not know whether his reading is improved, but he speaks French much more easily; he pronounces so well that one would hardly know he was German. Your uncle says that I attach an absurd importance to this, and it so happens that he himself is the cause, for I think that in the present condition of Germany it is a great advantage for him to be settled, and so honourably, in France; and it would be an inestimable advantage for him if he spoke French like a Frenchman. It is an axiom for me that when it is useful to do a thing at all, even to sweep a room, it is better to do it well. One cannot give children great abilities. Nature is more capricious in this respect than in any other—it is quite revolting; but one can enable them to do with ease the things which can be acquired.

When I consider B——, who at heart is an excellent man, but who is awkwardness personified—everybody laughing at him, for he is as tiresome as the rain; he never moves or speaks without making me shudder with *horror* (alas! this is the right word), making himself disagreeable to the whole world, except his mother and his wife (the latter is dead, and Heaven only knows what a fool she was!)—I say to myself, "This is the effect of education." Certainly, he could never have been turned into a genius or a Chevalier de Grammont, but he was wanting neither in good sense nor in sympathy; he is naturally affectionate. What a misfortune when one has a heart to inspire nothing but repugnance! For my part, to be with him is a perpetual occasion of remorse and a constant effort to endure his presence. Here, then, is an extreme case of bad bringing up without there being a single radical defect of heart or head; for although not clever he had good sense and morality—much good do they do him!—but it would take ten pages to tell all the consequences. I only wish to prove that education may spoil the normal work of nature, and I jump to my conclusion, which is that I came back from England on purpose to have Nandor (as in spite of all my efforts he is called by that frightful name) with me during the second month of his holidays, so that he may not be too much left to chance. He repeated to me to-day a fable of Lafontaine which his master had taught him. That master does not know how much of my good will he has earned by that action. . . .

I quitted my poor sister with my heart torn in pieces, but I would not let her see it; all agitation is bad for her. It is impossible to express my extreme tenderness for her; words are so inadequate that I have recourse to tears when I speak of her. I regretted leaving all the more that I managed to keep from her many things which would have worried her, and I fear that no one will be as watchful as I was. Nevertheless C—— (poor fellow), thank God agrees with me that one must keep all worries from her; but he was away when I left, and this idea distresses me. If I see that I can be useful to her, I will go back to her in November.

If K—— were my daughter, I should not hesitate to accept the proposal you told me of. In the first place I should strain every nerve to put together the *dot*, for the *dot* is right and necessary. You have no idea—no, not the remotest—of the absurdity of the English on this point. There are not three among three millions who would set about marrying their daughters in a sensible way. They would say, "What! she must have money? This man, then, does not love her; he only wants her money. Good Heavens! he may go to the devil!" Mr. L——, who is very fond of his daughters and always gives them the nicest bits at dinner, would faint at the idea of disgorging even twenty thousand francs; besides, he thinks every man ought to be too happy to possess one of his daughters. In the mean time girls do not marry at all; and if they are bored and do wild things like P——, the world is indignant; and while it has the greatest contempt for the weaker sex, it exacts from it a supernatural strength. If I could write and make human creatures talk like Mrs. Gaskell, I would put L—— and his whole family full length in a book, and I should think I was doing a good action; for England will never correct herself till she sees herself painted honestly as she is in her domestic relations.

Adieu, dear child; it is midnight, and I must go to bed.

M. M.

September 17, 1868.

DEAREST MILADI,

Delighted to see your green paper. I was so dreadfully done up on Friday I could not go to bid you good-bye. I had my things to pack, for I travel without a maid. I, of course, have more trouble, but on balancing the account I find it is best. First, I

am very well satisfied with my French maid, but she is not a Malie,* and would learn ways in English houses that I don't approve; she would say, "That or this is not my place, ma'am." Now, that I can't put up with. . . .

I saw Donnington Castle when a girl of fourteen, as one sees a house by paying the housekeeper, and if ever I go that way I will do so again, to see the place of your youth. My imagination (my favourite part of myself) is always fed by localities; I delight in them. Was there not a Lord Wharton famous for seducing all the ladies in Walpole's time? There's no such thing now, I think; they have a new way. A handsome, agreeable fellow tries all his arts, not to make her his mistress, but to make her in love with him, and leaves her with a scarred heart and blighted hopes. She marries some one she don't care a fig for and grows worldly and cold-hearted, is never happy, but jogs through the world like a stage-coach passenger, with neither happiness, pleasure, nor pain (sometimes she dotes on her children); or she keeps her sore heart and lives single for his sake, takes to study, book-writing, or charities. Now, these are in general the most distinguished women in England. I honour and admire them. They are too good for the men by half, and, as a Frenchman once said, "the English women are angels from heaven whom a set of demons have carried off into a certain foggy island. These angels wait upon and adore these demons, who are so little able to appreciate them, that when one of them has lost her fine celestial nature, she then becomes the queen and favourite of the infernal society." There are innumerable exceptions, no doubt; but the habitual selfishness of Englishmen, even good ones, is astounding to my foreign-educated eyes. If I am wrong pray tell me so. I have so much *entraînement* in talking with you, for you are the only Englishwoman to whom I can give vent to my opinions, and I like to have yours beyond any others on a thousand subjects, for they have been aired, not falsified, by passing through many atmospheres.

I have seen no one but my nephew, aged seven and a half, for whose sake I came back. His holidays began in the beginning of August. I hear him read three times a day; that is my intellectual amusement. Pray did you teach your three boys to read, and did they give you much trouble? Mr. Mohl is delighted with London; he will take you this letter.

* Lady William's German maid.

To Madame von Schmidt.

(*Translation.*)

Paris, January, 1869.

I go out very little at night, and have no inclination to do so. I have not been out for the last five days, except on Saturday, when I saw the Gazza Ladra, which gave me great pleasure, and, although the weather was abominable, did me no harm. Do not tire yourself with society, except that of people who are worth the trouble; it is much better to read a good book. There are many evenings which I regret having passed with people who gave me no satisfaction at the time, and have left no trace in my memory; and I think of poor Hilly, who did nothing else during the last ten years of her life. Beware of your sociability, my dear child. I am not speaking against holidays, such as going to Munich—on the contrary, that is excellent; but I mean people like E——. There must be a great many such at Vienna. Do not encourage them; you will be sorry for it later.

The Gazza Ladra gave me so much pleasure that I shall try it again. Madame L—— is an admirable woman for having a box. Have you read the article I liked so much? Did you try to see Madame Tautphœus?* If not, you were very wrong. If I went to Munich, I would see her, whether it suited her or not. Adieu, dear child.

Madame Mohl paid a short visit to London this year. She wrote from Cold Overton—

July 26, 1869.

DEAR MINNIE,

I had intended to go and see you before I left London, but I found it impossible, being engaged day and night the last five or six days. I left on the 9th, and have been here ever since. I was *so* sorry to go, but I wanted to be with my dear sister, and I have found her infinitely better than last year. . . .

I have been reading, and am reading, Mr. Senior's book and yours about Ireland, and find it quite different from the journals I read, as it is a complete account of the state of the country for the last thirty or forty years. It is very curious, and tells me many

* Authoress of "The Initials."

things that I had no idea of, and the shameful conduct, in my opinion, of Sir R. Peel. You can't say more than I know and think of the bigotry, ignorance, and absurdity of most people on that question and many others.

In the way of nonsense in public men, nothing ever astonishes me; but what does astonish me is the superstition in them indulged in by a large number of people, who accept things which these men have said and done in opposition to all common sense and justice.

Mr. Mohl writes me curious accounts of the present state of France, which your dear father would have gone to see with such interest. I often think of the pleasant breakfasts he used to give me both in London and Paris, and of the pleasure it gave me when I could find any one who had something to tell him.

Cold Overton, September 18, 1869.

DEAREST MILADI,

I cannot give you a biography of Prévost-Paradol * at all complete. I know his mother was an actress of considerable talent; I have seen her act at the Odéon in tragedy. He has been known about eight or ten years for his articles in the *Débats*, and has a knack greatly valued at this time of saying sharp truths to the Government with adroitness enough to avoid their stringent laws. However, the *Débats* has been *averti* on his account, and he may now only write on literature. A book of his was published last year, I think, called "Les Moralistes de France," or some such title; it was chiefly made up of his articles. He married very young (twenty-three, I think), a woman older than himself, from love. He has three children, and has enough to do to maintain them. She went out of her mind four or five years ago. He is very young-looking and most agreeable, so much so that if he were not married he would, no doubt, with his reputation, make a very good match. He was elected of the Académie Française after eight days' candidateship, distancing a knot of men who had tried for months, even years. I tell you what is the general opinion. I like his company, but am not in the least intimate with him, and can give only the outside and general outline.

I have been back only a week from the prettiest place I ever saw

* Prévost-Paradol was appointed by Ollivier French Minister at Washington, where he died by his own hand in 1870.

at the Nightingales, and I am going to-day to Peterborough, to the bishop's; I shall remain there but three days, as I am not sure whether an episcopal palace will agree with me. He (Dr. Jeune) is a clever man; I stayed with him at Oxford. He speaks French like a Frenchman, being born in Jersey.

Adieu, dearest Miladi. I shall see you in October. The Stanleys remained three days at the Hague with the queen, and saw everything and everybody. Mr. Mohl is going to meet the queen at Baden.

To Lady Augusta Stanley.

Paris, September, 1869.

DEAREST DEAR,

As you told me you would not be at home till the latter end of the month, and as I was swimming in uncertainty—a thing I detest—I did not write; and now, though I am not out of it, I do write.

I had a letter yesterday from Mrs. Story, saying they could scarcely be at Rome before the first days in November; that means, I suppose, 3, 4, 5, 6, or 7. Now, my spouse thinks it *right* to be here by December 1; and when he thinks a thing *right*, I don't like to run counter, though I might not be so particular for my own use; therefore I wish to conform.

If Mr. Mohl makes up his mind to go this journey, and go to a hotel at Rome to wait for the Storys, we should leave something like October 3 or 4; but let me know your dates. At any rate, whether we are here or not, you will be more at home here than at a hotel; and Julie and I have settled you are to come to your room, and she'll put up the new curtains, at which you are to fall into a syncope of admiration; and we must know when you come, but if you could hurry a bit we could set off together.

The proposed Italian trip was a great success, although Madame Mohl, who was now in her seventy-sixth year, suffered from the fatigue and inconveniences of travelling. She met the Duchess Colonna at Rome, which was a great pleasure to them both.

CHAPTER XII.

SIEGE AND COMMUNE (1870–71).

Ollivier's ministry—Death of the Duc de Broglie—Friendship in France—Government melting like snow—Ignorance of foreign *diplomats*—L. N. fears the democracy—Workmen flock to Paris—Guizot's grief—Respect for age in France—Madame Mohl as housemaid—Death of Montalembert—Breakfast for Lord Russell—Highwayman's horse—Departure of Nandor—Children's minds should not be stretched—Inferiority of women owing to their trying exclusively to please men—Painted statues—Régnault's colouring—The Hohenzollern affair—Horror of the war—Exile—Life in London—Siege of Paris—Disorganization of railways and means of transport—Heroism of Julie—The Commune—Demonstration of "Friends of Order"—Trochu—Cheap edition of the Terror—Imprisonment of archbishop and clergy—Cannonades—Loss of memory—Success of Jew—Emigration—Commune refuses indemnity—Village in flames—Dufaure's house ransacked and Princess Mathilde's—Orgies of the mob—State of Paris—The nation will right itself—Committee of Public Safety—Theodore Parker—An *égoutier* director of the National Library—Proposed destruction of monuments—Arbitrary arrests—Imprisonment of Monseigneur Perny—*Carte de sûreté*—Appropriation of public money by Communists—Thiers' house ransacked—Colonne Vendôme—An organ-grinder minister—Reasons for staying in Paris—To protect one's property—Marriage laws altered—Desertion of the streets—Thiers—Scarcity of provisions—Paris in flames—Pétroleuses—Victory of the Versaillois—Frightful reprisals—Thiers—Intense thirst—Madame Mohl returns to Paris—State of the town—Every one in mourning—Senior's journals—Thiers—Empress of Russia at Petersthal—Priests in Germany—Paris in October.

LOUIS NAPOLEON was, as a clever Frenchman said, "condamné à être brillant." The empire was growing more and more unpopular, and he astonished the world in the beginning of 1870 by the appointment of a Liberal ministry under Ollivier. Madame Mohl describes the impression he produced in her first letter. Before finishing it she was much distressed by the death of the Duc de Broglie, which was followed not long after by that of Montalembert.

To Lady William Russell.

January 9, 1870.

We are all full of our new government, which began awkwardly. Ollivier went himself at eleven at night to propose the Préfecture de Marseille to a lawyer called Salveta, whom he knew and no one else knew. Salveta, tired and in bed, told the maid to give five francs to the man, thinking he was a servant wanting an *étrenne*. The town is full of stories of people to whom ministries were offered, because no one would act with Ollivier.

February 1, 1870.

DEAREST MILADI,

I received yours, brought by Arthur to-day, whom I did not see. I found, to my consternation, that the letter I began on January 9 had never been finished, as I found it on rummaging in a drawer to see the date of your last. I send it, stale and insignificant as it is, to show you that my head, not my heart, is in fault. It is true that I have been much afflicted by the death of the Duc de Broglie. He was an ideal before I knew him, and I have to add to the regret of losing him that of not knowing him twelve years ago instead of three; for he called upon me then, and though I was much flattered by the attention, I did not request to see him again, nor do the ordinary civilities which I should have done to an ordinary person, but I had so great a reverence for him that I did not dare to express my wish to see him again. It has been one of my great drawbacks in life that I never could make advances to those I most admired, unless they were more demonstrative than shy and reserved people are capable of being. He was remarkably shy, and since I have known him I have been even more astonished at his stepping out of his habits than at my own stupidity. He is a great public loss; his moral standard was so much above that of other public men, that the very sense of it will disappear, and his extreme unconsciousness of his own worth had a grace which is indescribable. I am grateful to Madame de Staël for the three winters I have seen him habitually; but I never should have had that happiness if she had not climbed up my stairs, when she was so ill with asthma she could hardly breathe, to ask me to go there with Mr. Mohl, as there were no ladies but herself, and she was often too ill to go, and it made them all melancholy to see nothing but black coats. Now,

this is so entirely a French feeling, that I think you would not believe it if you had not lived all over Europe and received your first education here.

We are all still in astonishment at this new state of things, and can hardly believe in it; but, in spite of pessimists, I think it will not go back. You remember the letters I sent you last summer, in which Mr. Mohl gave me such a curious picture of the state of things, of the Government "melting away like a statue of snow." You will not wonder at the change; you will only be astonished that it changed peaceably, which ought, I think, to prove to the English nation how perfectly absurd was the whole course of the conduct of the Government. The absolute ignorance of the foreign *diplomats* here is one of my wonders. That they should never have known that every old institution was sapped, and ruined when they had nothing to do but to open their eyes, is what I cannot understand—that they should not know, for example, that the destruction of Paris was as arbitrary a measure as Charles I.'s taxes. The law was always that the préfet should have a council chosen by the chief inhabitants for all great alterations. Louis Napoleon turned out all who opposed his measures, and named the successors himself. I astonished the wife of the Secretary to the American Embassy by telling her this. They never think of inquiring into the state of the country. I remember Lord Cowley scarcely knew who the Duc de Broglie was, after being here eight or ten years.

M. Masson is named Préfet of Lille. Lady Holland knows him well; he proposed sending troops in 1852 to deliver Changarnier from the fortress of Ham. Masson was then Préfet of Amiens. When he went to Louis Napoleon the other day, as préfets do on being appointed, L. N. was very civil, and told him he named him at Thiers' request, as he was grateful to Thiers for his support. Now, the fact is, I believe, L. N. has been terrified by the democracy, whom he had encouraged against the middle classes, and finds these quondam friends more difficult to manage than the *bourgeoisie*, whom he hated. There are still two hundred thousand, some say four hundred thousand, workmen made artificially within the last ten years to build houses not wanted. They were drawn from the plough from all parts of France by enormous wages, and have learned luxurious habits. The landed proprietors cannot find labourers. How such an overflowing will re-enter into its bed again I know not, and

two hundred thousand workmen would not be convenient to deal with, neither is it certain that soldiers would fire on them. These are some of the difficulties L. N. has had to bring him down, and people will not pay more taxes. What is to be done? He must make friends with the taxpayers instead of those who will be paid.

To Miss E. Martin.

The Duc de Broglie is gone, and one may truly say the highest standard of what a public man should be, and a private one too, has disappeared. Poor Guizot had been his friend for fifty years, and his daughter told Madame de Loménie, who told me, that the day after he wept like a child. The tears of a man of eighty-two have something awful in them. . . . These old folks are wonderfully interesting, and I am happy to say are made so much of in their old age that they feel it much less. It is the only country where age is more courted than youth. I feel it so myself.

To the same.

February 23, 1870.

I have been getting up these four days at twenty minutes before seven—hardly light. What for? Guess you never will, so I'll tell—to light the fire. Josephine could not live with the new cook, and gave me warning, a week's here is sufficient. She is a great loss, for she is a capital servant, though no great things as a human being. As to the cook, she is the stupidest creature, and always complaining; of course I shall not keep her. I have one in view. The new maid came yesterday afternoon; but, nevertheless, I got up at half-past six this morning to show her how to light a coal fire, which nobody knows how to do here, and I dare say *you* don't know. If I were but stronger I should be a capital housemaid. I took my new maid from her face and countenance, without troubling myself about references. I had nine applications. She was the only one I immediately took to; we shall see if I was right. The cook had every recommendation, and is the plague of my life; her only quality is being kind to the cat, and that is a considerable one. I fetched the coals downstairs; I did a hundred odd jobs. You would have been edified to see it, for my cook is always complaining that she has so much to do, and used to make Josephine work so hard she could not stay; however, it did me no harm, and I went to a party last night to forget

my household troubles; it was at an old acquaintance's whom I have never been to see at night. I found all sorts of fine people, and one lady I had not seen since I was at the Abbaye-au-Bois. She came up to me and was very civil, and said, "You have all the sovereigns coming to your parties, and the cleverest men." I said, "One sovereign had honoured me so much and no more." I could not help laughing in my sleeve, thinking if she had seen me raking out the coals that morning that the sovereigns would have appeared rather inappropriate guests. I went the other night to the Liebreichs'; they were alone; he sang the whole evening so beautifully, I never heard any one sing like him anywhere. He sang Handel in perfection, and Don Giovanni's serenade far better than the actor at the opera I had heard four nights before. Tell Margy this; she will like to hear of him. He is very delightful; he made so much of Kate Helmholtz, because he considers her father as the making of him; and so he is, for the instrument he invented was first used here by Liebreich.

There was a very successful meeting in Parliament yesterday. The English know no more about France and its institutions than about Japan; and what is more curious is, they don't even know how ill Louis Napoleon behaved to us English when he thought he could do it with impunity; however, it was useful, by making us give up all alliances with him after the Crimean War, and establish the volunteers, after he had had put in the French papers that England was a nest of brigands, harbouring Orsinis and the like, and that the French ought to go and punish them. He expected our police to be even more watchful than his own about his precious self. I keep a *Punch* of those days.

To Lady Augusta Stanley.

Paris, May 3, 1870.

DEAREST LOVE,

I miss both the duke and Montalembert more than I might even miss more intimate friends, because I had for twelve years scarcely ever been a week without seeing Montalembert when he was in Paris; he seldom failed to come on Fridays when he was able to go out, and after his illness I went every Friday at five o'clock to see him. These habits are so unusual, except in Paris, that no one has an idea how much they conduce to the *agrément* of

society. I had a profounder veneration for the Duc de Broglie than for any one else, and though the habit was acquired only for three winters, it had taken great hold. I never could venture to go there since his death till last Sunday night, and then Albert seemed so cordial, that I shall certainly go again, and perhaps keep it up. I went to thank him for coming with alacrity to a breakfast at ten! with Lord John Russell and his spouse. The hour was his (Lord R.'s) choice, and M. Mignet vowed he could not come out so early; but I had Guizot, Barthélemy, the Broglies, and M. de Parieu, a minister you don't know, but who often comes to see some of our exotics, which vegetable he has a great taste for, and, though a minister under this rascal-ocracy, I even invited him, because he has been known to speak very roughly to its chief. Though overwhelmed with business, he came, and Lanfrey, whom I sat by Lord John at breakfast. My breakfast, though woefully managed in the creature comforts, had much success; but the best was this. At Lord Lyons', that dear man Lord John said to the Princess Julie (*née* Buonaparte), "I was introduced yesterday to M. Lanfrey, a very clever young writer." *Julie.* "What, the fellow who has written that abominable book?" Lord Lyons came to the rescue to pacify her; but Lord J. Russell, nothing abashed, said, "Oh, I liked him very much; he is very clever and very modest." Was not that a tit-bit for you and me? I introduced him to my lady, and was impudent enough to ask her to invite him to come and call on her in England. I can't think where I got such a front "on a des moments heureux." After asking this of Lady Russell, I recollected my grandmother's illustration of my character,* and thought it just, and as Arthur is an antiquarian that story is for him.

I have had as a visitor these four months a daughter of M. Helmholtz by a first wife, who nevertheless calls me aunt. I'm very fond of her. She has a great turn for landscape-painting, and I take her to England to see our famous water-colours. I made a bold push, and asked Madame Schwabe to house her in London in my room, trusting to Providence for myself. You are my providence; but if you should have to be the providence of some one else, Mrs. Simpson has asked me to go to her. Now, I had rather be with you than at the royal board, and it is but honest to confess it, though savouring of the above-mentioned horse and conduct; at the same

* See p. 4, story of the highwayman's horse.

time, your kindness should not be trespassed upon, and I just tell you how I feel about the abbey; but it's no wonder, when queens throng to it to meet the learned.

She had many wise views on education. She wrote in 1870 to Miss E. Martin—

Never say to a child, "Look at your brother, so much younger and so much wiser;" you will plant eternal jealousy into the child's heart which nothing will ever eradicate; let sympathy act slowly; besides, he had better keep his faults than have a gnawing at his little heart that will destroy his family feelings, and make him look upon himself as an outcast. It is such a mistake in education, and so frequent, that a good book ought to be written about it.

M. Mohl took his nephew back to Germany, fortunately, just before the war broke out.

To Madame von Schmidt.
(Translation.)

Paris, May 7, 1870.

Mr. Mohl has made up his mind to take Nandor to Heidelberg on July 1. I love him very dearly, and you need not fear lest his stay here should have in any degree diminished my affection for him. . . . You should not talk to him of things above his comprehension; the minds of children ought not to be stretched any more than their limbs, and it is better to teach them words than ideas; this was the old fashion, but it is also the fashion of nature, who gives us memory before reflection. I cannot give an opinion as to your new notions on the education of girls at Vienna. I am sure, however, that they are foolishly brought up everywhere for fear of knowledge doing them harm, whereas the emptiness of their heads is the real evil—and the absence of rational ideas. If I ask my way in the street of a well-dressed woman, "I don't know" is the invariable reply. It is the same thing in London. If a woman wants to stop an omnibus, she always chooses a sharp incline on which the poor horses can hardly stand. Women never put themselves in the places of others; they have no feeling of justice. Englishwomen have occasionally, but not while they are young. In short, men have contrived to make women

as incapable as possible, except where their little paltry interests or ridiculous sentimentalities (which disgust me) are concerned. I am struck by the inferiority of their minds (but I don't tell this to men). What they ought to learn is, not Latin, but to live; but how are they to learn this? Always watched, always kept in leading-strings, they are, compared with men, what the women of Europe are compared with those of the East—children at thirty. Their beauty and their dress, and those of their neighbours, are their only subjects of conversation among themselves. The English are certainly better, because they are more independent; but very little. It is not the fault of nature, but that of men, who require of them only one virtue, and the proof of this is that that one quality only goes by the name of virtue for women. They are not tolerable before they are forty. The women of the lower classes in this country are superior to the English, because they work for their living. As for women's politics, they inspire me with inexpressible disgust; they are always afraid of losing this or that. But I might go on for ever. I am convinced that as long as women's sole object is to please men they must be like this. Just fancy a man who dressed himself up and directed all his efforts to pleasing women; what a fool he would be!

The Duchess Colonna has come back. Her statue, cast in bronze, is at the Exhibition. I fought hard to prevent the whites of the eyes from being painted; it was hideous. She gave way to me and three or four others, against her own and Gounod's opinion. There is a picture of Régnault's of which people talk as a masterpiece of colouring (poor praise, I think; but the public is so foolish). The subject, rather a yellow Spanish gipsy, with a yellow curtain behind her; a gold vase in her hand, and a copper one on the ground; all these yellows are different. It is very luminous, and the world is in ecstasies; certainly a very intellectual employment of art.

Madame Mohl paid a long visit to London this year, little knowing that more than a twelvemonth would elapse before she would see her home again. She and Mademoiselle Helmholtz stayed with us for a fortnight, during which we had many pleasant entertainments. She was, however, very anxious about the war. She wrote to Lady William—

Cold Overton, July 31, 1870.

DEAREST MILADI,

I sent a letter of Mr. Mohl's from Stuttgart, but I am sadly afraid it has lost its way. You can have no idea of the affliction and irritation he is in; *I* can, because I feel the same. L. N. will begin again the intrigues of his uncle, and prove by the caricature that the great man was more a great intriguer than a great general. One wonders at the folly of the world, which always takes every one on his own estimation. If this one succeeds in ruining Germany as did his uncle, by dividing her by cunning, it will show it.

I forget if I wrote you the real story of the Hohenzollern affair. I will risk repeating it. The Duchess Stéphanie of Baden's daughter married a Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, the Stéphanie being first cousin to Queen Hortense, and the same sort of person—one niece, the other daughter, to Josephine. They were like sisters. The daughter of Stéphanie was much brought up with Louis Napoleon, so much so that Madame Cornu's * husband (at that time unknown, and patronized by L. N.) did the princess's picture for the Exhibition, and Madame Cornu gave me an engraving of it twenty-five years ago. She was much invited and petted by the young princess —a playfellow, like herself, of L. N.

L. N. proposed a little while ago to his old playfellow's second son to marry the daughter of the Duchess of Alba, niece to the Empress Eugénie, and promised to help him to the crown of Spain. This was probably to rival Montpensier. The young man refused, but the idea had taken root in L. N's. head. He proposed then the eldest son, leaving out the condition of the marriage. This fact I have from Germany; but the intimacy has been known to me for the last twenty-five years, when I first became intimate with Madame Cornu, and the story fits in perfectly with what I hear. L. N., as you have seen, had the story circulated of its being an idea emanating from the King of Prussia, and found that it took. All this is so like the first Bonaparte, and the use he made of gossip; his calumnies of the Queen of Prussia circulated all over Europe, and others I have not time to name. Meanwhile the industrious peasants of the south of Germany and the Rhine will all be ruined, the cattle taken, the corn trod down. Oh, I could cry!

* Louis Napoleon's foster-sister.

35, South Street, Tuesday, October, 1870.

DEAR MINNIE,

I think you wrote you would be in London about this time. I have been here since September 21, so ill and dolorous that I had not spirits to write; if you can, pray come and see me. I came to town to consult Mussy. Mr. Mohl was obliged to come and fetch me from Cold Overton; luckily, my dear Florence lent us her house, which has a window in Park Lane, and very cheerful. I should have died if I had been in a lodging looking on the street. My illness was brought on in great part by my tormenting myself about the war, which entirely took away the capacity of eating, and brought on a catarrh of the stomach.* I was so weak I could not stand. Then, to finish me, my nephew died on Saturday; and I want to go to my poor sister who was not with him. And Paris goes on worse than ever. Sometimes I think I shall never go home, and to be without a home and ill is no joke. Pray come and see me, if you are in London.

Yours ever,
M. MOHL.

I went at once, and carried her back with me in a couple of days. She was very joyful at returning to family life. She stayed with us till Christmas; from us she went to Mrs. Milman's, and then to Sir John Clark's, both in Cornwall Gardens. She always spoke of this as of the time when she was "on the parish," and of South Kensington as "the village."

M. Mohl was staying with Madame Schwabe, but he came to see her every day. "Oh, Mr. Mohl," she used to say, "shall we ever see our home again?" "Yes, Madamchen," was the invariable reply. It was a delightful time for her hosts, for besides the charming society of M. and Madame Mohl, all her friends clustered round her; everybody did their best to amuse her. She went out a great deal, and had the power of throwing off her anxieties, both in society and in reading.

* This was the complaint from which she suffered at intervals all her life.

She used to read Lord Palmerston's life, and other books of the kind, with avidity. She dearly liked what she called being made a fuss of; she was a very grateful person, and every act of kindness was appreciated and remembered by her. Dean Stanley and Lady Augusta, Sir Bartle and Lady Frere, Sir Rutherford and Lady Alcock, Mr. Newton, Mr. Fergusson, —in short, it would be impossible to enumerate those who came constantly to see her. There were other French exiles who contributed to the interest of society in that year. The Viardots, who received every Saturday evening, and had beautiful music; the De Mussys, whose agreeable house was open to all their compatriots; Ivan Tourguénieff, Taine, Lanfrey, and many others.

One of her French habits, which was rather inconvenient to her host, was that she insisted upon keeping large sums of money in her bedroom; nothing would persuade her to have a banker. She never remembered where she put her money away, and constantly thought she had lost it; and then there was a grand hunt and disturbance, and every one was upset till it was found again, which it always was, in some bag or drawer. She was scrupulously punctual, and appeared with the utmost regularity at our early breakfast. There never was a guest who gave less trouble. Her great luxury was a good fire, and she disliked the English love for open windows. "My dear, it's quite a malady," she would say—an expression she used of any taste she did not share.

Both M. and Madame Mohl were somewhat confused by the multiplicity of their engagments. He used to bring his memorandum-book to me to have them entered; and as long as she remained with us I had to keep her up to the mark. It was more difficult after she left our roof. Many people attributed her forgetfulness to rudeness; but this was a great mistake, as the following note will show.

From Sir John Clark's, 38, Cornwall Gardens, 1871.

DEAR MINNIE,

I'm in a pretty fix! It seems Lady Clark invited Miss Smith to lunch with me to-morrow; she told me over and over again. Alackaday! how can people who are ruined, undone, dying, and in exile, remember? Pray say I am half-crazy to Madame de Bunsen, who will sympathize, as her spouse *connaît des paroles sur cet air là.*

Ever yours, madam my conscience-keeper,

M. M.

To Madame von Schmidt.

(*Translation.*)

38, Cornwall Gardens, February 18, 1871.

MY DEAR CHILD,

I am really ashamed of having been so long in answering your kind letter. I will tell you the reasons, but they are not excuses, for the sort of languor to which I have yielded is a great fault. First, I was ill; second, I have changed my habitation ten times since I came to London,* each time obliged to pack up and turn out my poor little belongings, always tired, and hating the occupation; third, I have been obliged to think more of my dress than usual—being on visits I must be at least *respectable* (a thing I hate), and wear a cap all the morning, have it washed and made up again when the horrible coal-smoke blackens it; fourth, my economy, which has obliged me to spend time in needlework; fifth, my love of reading, which has saved me from the sadness which has fallen upon all my companions in misfortune; and, besides these reasons, the necessity to make myself agreeable to the hosts who have been so very kind to me; I have now four pressing invitations to stay with friends who are very agreeable and whom I like very much. I must own that never was a refugee so spoiled or made so much of, and, wonderful to relate, even my caps (not over and above clean) have not repelled them. Your uncle has been all this time at Madame Schwabe's. First, he cannot bear changing—it necessitates a mental adaptability which he does not possess; and he is also in the centre of the town and of his occupations; and finally, she and all the family are very fond of him. He will return to Paris as soon as he possibly can without wasting too much time on the road.

* She means since she left Paris in the previous year.

Albert Tourguénieff set off a week ago, and last Friday had only reached Amiens, although he had a passport from the lord mayor as bearer of provisions—a present from the city of London to the city of Paris. Why are there these obstacles? All the railroads are broken, the rails carried off, the bridges destroyed. There are three times more provisions at Boulogne and Havre than of men to unload the vessels. You can form no idea of the general disorganization, which has destroyed all the habits and facilities introduced by one hundred years of civilization; and as the old diligences and means of conveyance no longer exist, one cannot fall back on them. But the evil passions, always ready to spring up in men brutalized by war, flourish. Thus the partisans of Germany enact that the convicts in all the harbours shall stand with their arms folded before vessels charged with provisions, declaring that without a large fee they will not help to unload them; and, on the other hand, the partisans of France declare that Paris is dying of hunger because, in spite of all that has been said about the free passage of provisions, none were allowed to come in that were not brought by Germans, who want to monopolize the large profits obtained from the starving population. I believe that abuses may take place on each side, but the real reason for the delay and misery lies in the general disorganization; for instance, the delay in receiving letters, which can be a source of profit to nobody. Neither I nor any one else received any until ten or twelve days after communications were officially open. I got one on the 15th from the Haughtons, written on the 10th, and one two days before written on the 3rd. They have suffered greatly, as they could not eat horse. During the last month the bread was so abominable, that if they had not had a little provision of sea-biscuits they must literally have died of hunger. The shells were whizzing round their house in the Rue Gay-Lussac, near the Panthéon, and poor Eliza, who cannot get up or down stairs, expected every moment to be struck. Her sister would not leave her, but stayed with her by the fireside the whole time. All the rest of the household took refuge in the cellar. They went to the Rue du Bac. The garden was full of shells, but none had struck the house. My two maids slept in the cellar or the kitchen next to it; but Julie—the heroic Julie—would not leave our apartment, because if a shell had burst in she might put out the fire and save our possessions. How, then, can people say the French are all demoralized? With regard to common

sense, that is another affair; they would have shown it if, after Louis Napoleon was taken prisoner, they had declared that the nation had never desired the war—which is the truth—and that they would give up the frontier fortresses and pay the war indemnity to Prussia to prove that they were in earnest. All Europe would have been on their side; and I am convinced that in ten or twelve years, perhaps earlier, they will see that they have only fed the vanity and increased the power of the Prussians by their folly; but just now they are like spoiled children who spite their appetite in order to worry mamma.

I am cured, but very thin and weak. I have too many dainties set before me, and I eat too much, although I govern myself very strictly. Mussy, the dear doctor, has cured me with factitious Carlsbad waters; and what touched me extremely, he sent back his fee, saying that he hoped I would consider myself a Parisian exile, from all of whom he would accept nothing. His letter is so charming that I preserve it as a relic.

Adieu, dear child. I have a thousand things more to say, but I must write to E——. I shall stay here till your uncle writes to me from Paris that I can go there straight, and that coal is easily obtained. I cannot do without a fire, and wood cannot be had, but as coal goes by water it may get there earlier; however, we are very ignorant as to what is going on. I have had only two letters, and those from Sophie;* Julie is more heroic than epistolary. My poor cat is dead, probably from want of food; she could not eat what they gave her, and there was no milk. My only comfort is in reflecting that she was ten or eleven years old, and that her life had been very happy. But I cannot bear to think of it.

I do not often see the Tourguénieffs, because they live so far off; it tires me, and I am very economical, not knowing what income we shall have. We must make up our minds to railroads paying nothing for years, and that the war indemnities will be enormous. No matter; if I lose half my income it will be worth while to have got rid of Bonaparte. I have always said, and I now repeat to whoever will listen, that it is the fault of that rascal, who by disorganizing France, and then trying to keep up his despotism by making war, has brought us to this pass. Just at present the French cannot judge calmly, and the ridiculous republicans are so mad that they absorb

* Madame Quirins.

public attention. I believe firmly in the restoration of the Orleans family, and I hope that it will not try to rouse and profit by the old sentiment of French glory. I have more confidence in the character of the Comte de Paris than in that of his uncles. Happily, he is the youngest, and the heir. Perhaps I shall not live to see it, but I am convinced that he will be King of France. A thousand things to Franz.

As soon as the siege was raised, M. Mohl returned to Paris, promising to send for his wife as soon as it was possible for her to travel. Her anxiety then became very great; for the first time it struck her that she might survive her husband. "Oh, my dear," she would exclaim, "what would my life be worth if I lost Mr. Mohl?"

Then came the Commune. She obstinately refused to read the newspapers, nor could she bear to talk of the horrors that were going on. Her husband's letters arrived very irregularly, sometimes two or three together, sometimes none at all for several days. His letters to Lady William Russell complete the history of that terrible period.

M. Mohl to Lady William Russell.

8, Clarges Street, Tuesday.

DEAR LADY HOSPITALITY,

Got a letter from Aristotle.* My house all right. Bombs fallen along my windows in the garden. Julie, our old cook, behaved with great gallantry.

Yours very sincerely,

J. MOHL.

He believes peace will be made before the end of February. Ainsi soit-il.

February 14, 1871.

* Barthélemy St. Hilaire.

Charenton,* March 23, 1871.

DEAR LADY WILLIAM,

I got yesterday your letter, and set off instantly to go to the Rue Pigalle.† As long as I was in the Faubourg St. Germain all went on well, although I saw many shops closed; but on the other side I heard the *rappel* beaten everywhere, and every open place was occupied by National Guards. I went through the Palais Royal, which I found entirely deserted; all the shops closed, and not a soul about. The iron railings of the garden were shut, but at last I found an outlet to the Rue Vivienne, where people were shutting up even the coffee-houses; and as I arrived on the boulevard, which I tried to cross at different places, but was warned off, I heard firing lower down, and a crowd running by, crying, "On nous assassine!" So I gave it up, and came home through the Rue Richelieu. The firing had been in the Rue de la Paix, on an unarmed *démonstration des amis de l'ordre.*

Things have turned considerably to the worse since my last letter, and one can hardly conceive how we can get out of the abyss of madness in which we have fallen. *Les amis de l'ordre* are now very sorry to have remained at home Saturday last, but it is very late, they are disorganized, disheartened, without a centre and any commander; and as the Comité of the Hôtel de Ville pays its ragamuffins and the transfuge soldiers ‡ magnificently, it can rely on them. The whole looks like an enormous pantomime, if it was not diversified by murder, and if it was not so entirely ruinous to Paris. The folly of all this is such that one could not believe it if one did not see it before one's eyes. The Prussians now declare they will bombard Paris, and we may possibly hear to-morrow the batteries of St. Denys opening on the town.

I shall not leave Paris, but I wish ardently that my wife should *not come.* This is no time to throw oneself in such a *fournaise de folie*, when one happens to be out of it. The few people I see are most unhappy, uneasy, and humiliated; they had borne up against the siege very well; they had accepted this hard peace with some hope of better times for France; but this madness of Paris breaks

* He likens Paris to a well-known madhouse.

† To see M. and Madame de Peyronnet, the parents of Lady Arthur Russell. M. de Peyronnet was very ill.

‡ Deserters.

their heart. When will this town become again what it has been, or like itself in any degree?

Poor Trochu is very ill looked upon even by his old friends, and I always maintain that they do not do him justice. Amongst the mob he is simply regarded as a traitor, and if he came here would be murdered instantly. The whole of the government of September 4 are looked upon as presumptuous fools, and it is certain they have ruined France by fighting on after Sedan. But my opinion is that the country would not have allowed them to make peace as long as it was not beaten beyond any hope of possible success. But I am getting into a disputation, which is not my intention, and so I must say good-bye.

Yours very gratefully,

ABOUL KASIM.

Pray send the enclosed scrap to my wife; it is, perhaps, an excessive precaution I take in sending it in this manner.

Paris, April 5, 1871.

DEAR LADY WILLIAM,

I take up my pen, while my windows shake from the cannon firing at Meudon or Montrouge, I cannot distinguish which, and while they are beating the *rappel* in all the quiet streets behind my house. This is the fourth day of fighting outside. The barbarians have been beaten every day; but, having nearly seven hundred battalions, they can send out new troops every day. We know very little of what is going on, even in the town, except as far as one sees with one's own eyes, which is not much, the eternal marching of rapscallion-looking, half-uniformed National Guards, interspersed with a sprinkling of Garibaldians, francs-tireurs, deserters from the line, or the Zouaves. But of what is going on in the Commune at the Hôtel de Ville, and the rival government of the Comité Central at the Place Vendôme, we hear very little. They quarrel every day. One or the other member of them resigns, or is put in prison. *Es ist eine wahre Hexenküche;* but I suppose in London you know more about it than we do here, only what you can hardly imagine is the state of this naturally gay place, many shops shut up entirely, all without any customers whatever, except the butchers, bakers, and grocers; and even the baker's wife told me yesterday she would leave the country if she could sell her shop. The Jesuits and the

Dominicans have been invaded and sent to prison; only sixty francs were found in the *caisse* of the Jesuits. M. de Guerry, the priest of the Madeleine's house, has been pillaged, and (I am told, but am not sure of it) the archbishop is to be arrested, and has hid himself.

This whole state of things is a cheaper and nasty edition of the Terror, without the slightest enthusiasm, except perhaps among a few hundred mad republicans, who preach the republic of divine right. The formula is, "La république au-dessus du suffrage universel." The harm they are doing to this country is beyond all calculation; it is worse than all the war has done. When I came here one saw every day things coming into their old state. The commands for wares came in so abundantly that the makers did not know how to execute them, because the workmen had been spoiled during the siege, being fed, paid, and dispensed of paying rent, getting drunk, and rejoicing in picnics on the ramparts. But with the cessation of the pay this would forcibly have changed, and the leaders of the revolt seized the moment when the military organization was not yet complete, and bribed the multitude by the promise of even better pay, and by the insane cry of a social republic. Now there is no work, and a prospect of misery for high and low.

April 6, morning.

I was again awoken by the cannon which comes from the side of Issy, or thereabouts. The defeat of the Commune seems now certain, as the troops fight, which was doubtful until yesterday except for a few regiments. The Commune shows signs of weakness and increased ferocity. The archbishop is in prison, and so is M. de Guerry. Six members of the Commune are said to be in prison. The National Guards, who do not appear when the *rappel* is beaten, are now searched for in their houses, and forced to march; the consequence is that they leave town by hundreds by the few doors which are yet open, and the rare trains of the northern and eastern railways which the Prussians force them to let pass. The Prussians have a short and persuasive way of telling them that such and such a thing is against the preliminaries of peace, and the Commune is very attentive to these little insinuations. I hope the Germans won't be obliged to come in, and in this I am more French than most French; and I find, too, I am more hopeful for the future of the country than

most of them. It is a pity to see them,—their pride is broken so much; but all this, I suppose, will grow again very quickly. But I must close this horrible scrawl, which I am doubtful if you can make out. I am going to Rothschild to get paid for those Lombard bonds you know of from your own experience.

Holy Easter, 1871.

I can tell you nothing which the *Times* and even your favourite *Echo* will not have told you many days before this reaches you, and much better than I could, although I have listened now during eight days to the booming of the cannon of the Versailles people, and during the last two days their battering the Porte Maillot, which it seems is a hard nut to crack. Now I hear them firing too from the Muette, it seems to me, and I wish them good-speed, because it is not comfortable to live with a hundred thousand madmen, or fools, or scoundrels with guns in their hands, and a Commune whose great preoccupation seems to be now to throw peaceful people in its prisons, which it had taken care to get emptied of all the rascals which were in them. They have found eleven hundred military prisoners, to whom they have given arms, two shillings a day and rations, and who must feel a halter round their necks and fight all the better for it.

I have had indirect news of M. de Peyronnet. It seems the principal illness of M. de Peyronnet is his loss of memory and much excitability. As to the loss of memory, we all suffer more or less from it, from being kept on the stretch with this miserable state of things. M. de P. likes to see Dr. Clavel, and has been out with him; but it is thought better not to let visitors come up, as he requires quiet. I find that many people, after the long tension of nerves during the siege, require much care to recover their natural state, and do not wonder at it.

I lead here a miserably solitary life. I look in every day at the Tourguénieffs', who are very miserable, as their eldest son, Albert, has a brain fever with delirium; it has lasted ten days, but is now getting better. But enough of our miseries. I will imagine myself sitting at eight o'clock at your round table, you writing a letter on green paper, and I eating tongue to open my appetite, and telling you that I sent a year ago a Jew from Adrianople to Saba to get rubbings of inscriptions of the defunct Queen of Sheba, of Solomonian

memory, and her ancestors and descendants. It is the third time I have got the French Government to send out somebody there. When I left, in August, we had no other news of the man than a little mention of him in a letter of the Governor of Aden. In February, I found in the *Augsburg Gazette* another mention of him and his doings, but a rather discouraging one, as it said that he copied the inscriptions in Hebrew characters, to be afterwards retranscribed in Sabéaa, which is a proceeding calculated to make the whole affair worthless. A few days ago the man walked into my room and brought me above five hundred inscriptions, copied, not in Hebrew, but in orthodox Sabéaa. He could not make rubbings with paper, as the Arabs would have murdered him instantly; and, notwithstanding all his precautions, he would have been ten times murdered if he had not been a Jew, and as such protected, hid, and fed by the Jews he found everywhere, who are sadly oppressed by the Arabs, but able and willing to shelter him to a certain degree. I am delighted at his success, and hope to publish this budget of news from the time of Solomon in the *Asiatic Journal*, as soon as the printing office is delivered from its savage occupants. And now my tale is told, your green letter is sealed, Malie has taken away your little moon-shaped table, Mrs. Arthur has eaten her prawns, Arthur has replaced the four little plates symmetrically, your man has brought mulligatawny; so let us enjoy ourselves.

Easter Monday.

Drumming; a few cannon-shot from Neuilly; no other news—at any rate you would have them sooner by telegraph; and this scribble is only to tell you that I am not yet in the Conciergerie, and hope not to go there.

April 17.

I hope you have received from time to time my melancholy epistles, which are written only for the purpose of proving that nothing has happened to me, and that one can go about in this Bedlam unharmed and unmolested until now. The town becomes every day more empty, five hundred thousand having emigrated; the consumption of flour has fallen from eight thousand tons a day to five thousand, which will give you an idea of the place. Yesterday, going through the Rue de Beaune, I found to my wonder a quantity of fowls and two big cocks wandering about and crowing as if they

were on a dunghill. The French Academy has given up its sittings *faute de combattants;* ours (the Inscriptions) is going on valiantly with sixteen members; and I held on Friday a sitting of the Société Asiatique with eight members, of which I was very proud.

My French friends are disheartened to an inconceivable degree; they see nothing before them but a state as in Spain or in Mexico. I can hardly believe it; but have given up the ungrateful *métier* of prophet in French affairs, as one may well do when one sees Paris commanded by a Polish conspirator and a Fenian.

Charenton, April 26.

Nothing new. Firing all day quite uselessly, it seems to us insiders, and no progress visible; National Guards very much fatigued, as far as we see. The official reports evidently lie, but yet the Commune finds thousands of men ready to fight, and Paris looks as impregnable as ever. The Commune is uncommonly civil to strangers—it don't want to be embroiled with foreign governments; but if the army cannot get in the Prussians *must*, because the Commune declares—not publicly, but privately—that not a penny of the indemnity shall be paid. En attendant nous faisons assez maigre chère ici. The Octroi has fallen from 80 thousand francs to 25 thousand, which shows that little meat and fish is coming. They say the Prussians will buy the Colonne Vendôme and rebuild it at Berlin; but this must be a joke, and a very grim one it is. I have got to-day, to my wonder, a new book about "Les Inscriptions Libyques en Algérie." It looked like a thing from another world, and I began instantly to read it; but it is hard reading, and would be so at any time. The author rejoices in the incredible name of Judas, and is a retired medical man, who is bitten with the rage of reading these Libyan things, which are most unreadable, and in a lost language. You may imagine the muddle of desperate conjectures one swims in.

But this scribble is only to assure you that I am alive, tolerably well, and at liberty—to prove which I am to dine to-day, of all places, near the Arc de Triomphe, which is not a *desirable locality*, as the advertisements have it; but as I shall send this off only to-morrow morning, it will prove that no bomb has cut in two

Your very devoted servant,

J. MOHL.

Paris, April 30, 1871.

Nothing new. Yesterday evening there was furious fighting, and I saw high flames rising from some unfortunate village—I suppose Clichy—which they together must have burned. This morning is deep silence, as if all the batteries had gone to church; but it will certainly not last long. I hope it is a sign that the fort of Issy is taken, which would bring us a little nearer to our deliverance from these hogs in armour who domineer over Paris. They are bitterly in want of money, and try to extort some from the railroads; the consequence will be that the railroads will stop; and already the Prussians send back the trains bringing victuals from Rouen for us, because the trains of the northern railroad do not come out of Paris —and so we are ground down between the upper and the nether millstone. They have broken into Dufaure's apartment, stolen his money and his railway bonds, strewed about his papers, and then put a seal on the door. They have found out where La Princesse Mathilde had put up her *mobilier*, and have stolen and broken what they liked. One hears of these things by accident; there is no journal which dares to speak, nor a tribunal to complain to. All this brings very little money, and dishonours la Commune. They have thoroughly frightened that *poule mouillée*, the archbishop, whom they threaten to shoot, which they won't do, I am sure, as it would be their own death. He is a trimmer and an intriguer, and has always been. I only wonder that they have not left him alone.

The moral aspect of Paris is lamentable beyond anything I should have thought possible. People look so hopeless and discouraged; they despair of France. It is not in the habit of the country to emigrate, else thousands would leave as soon as they could realize some part of their fortune. They will recover their spirits quickly enough when things get better, as I believe they will; but there is no doubt that this country is profoundly rotten. The ruin which will fall on it, and on every one of us, when this servile war will be finished and things looked upon in their true state, will be appalling. But it is not this which is the worst; a new generation may become rich again, but will this be soon enough in the nation to allow the sentiment of security to come back? But it is no use to speculate on the future; enough for the day is the evil thereof. And quite

enough we find it, because the weariness of spirit in living amongst this half-asinine, half-ferocious madness exceeds human patience.

They had a post in the Légion d'Honneur. These fellows discovered lately M. de Flahault's cellar, and had an orgie for three days and nights—lighted the whole place splendidly, and drank and danced in a beastly way. They were *all* strangers—Poles, Irish, Belgians; not a Frenchman amongst them.

But you must be sick of all my talk of this madhouse, only I know of nothing else. My intention is only to let you know that I had not been flayed or roasted until now, and that I hope not to be pillaged.

I am, dear Lady Hospitality,

Yours very gratefully,

J. MOHL.

Julius Mohl to Miss Emma Weston.

Paris, May 1, 1871.

. . . I won't try to give you any news from here, as the English papers tell you more and much sooner than we could, as we learn little and learn it late and imperfectly. This goes on to an almost incredible extent. Yesterday night there was such an infernal firing on the side of Neuilly and Les Ternes, that it kept me long from sleep by the mere noise and the shaking of my windows. I saw as I lay in bed the bombs flying and houses in Neuilly burning, but now at six in the evening I have no idea of what has happened; I suppose the evening paper will tell me something, but hardly as much as the *Times* will have given you at your breakfast this morning. But what you can hardly imagine is the moral and physical aspect of the town. More than a third of the population has left, and thousands are leaving every day; rich people are all gone, the well-to-do send away their families. Poor people go—the men because they do not want to serve in the National Guard, the women because they starve when the men do no military service. You see no woman in the street but in black. The men who are not in uniform, or in the nondescript things which are called so, go about in seedy clothes; it is not worth while to dress, and the tailors must have a sad time of it. But so have all merchants, bankers, manufacturers, shopkeepers, whoever makes or sells anything; even the bakers complain bitterly.

However, they have half of their customers, but other people have none whatever. Half the shops are shut up entirely, all at eight in the evening; the big emporiums like the Petit St. Thomas, le Bon Marché, Old England, etc., are perfect deserts, and they all take stock to employ the few *commis* they have kept so as to give an air of activity to these miserable and enormous wildernesses. The drumming and trumpeting is eternal, and so is the firing; the army makes progress but slowly, *et en attendant*, we are devoured by this vermin. The composition of the Commune is wonderful; some are old conspirators, journalists or *hommes de lettres*, some journeymen bookbinders or such like, some street musicians, some doctors, some lawyers. One who was *délégué à la bibliothèque impériale* was an *égoutier;* * he was *destitué* yesterday under the suspicion of having made away with money. How they made their way we do not know; most likely they were deep in the obscure socialist conspiracies which are constantly going on. Many were members of the *Comité International de l'Union Ouvrière.* It is about the strangest crew of governors ever seen, and they administer just as a band of swine would the gardens of Kew, or a drove of bulls the Crystal Palace. They have got hold of a good and bad idea—the necessity of great municipal rights—but they ride this hobby-horse to death in their folly. Their conception of a commune is insane; they want to make a state of it; for instance, they appropriate to the town of Paris all the great establishments of the state, and declare that they will indemnify France for them, and buy from it the Louvre and its galleries, the Jardin des Plantes, les Bibliothèques, les Facultés. They have got a minister of foreign affairs; they pretend to be at the head of the federation of the republican Communes de l'Europe; they claim all the legislative powers of a sovereign state, and want to change the distribution and property of capital, and this is what gives them their most sincere adherents—workmen who have been addled by insane discussions about the rights of capital and work. Then there are thousands of deserted soldiers, of Fenians, Poles, Garibaldians, and all the riffraff of cosmopolitan demagogy; many thousands of condemned criminals, who were not allowed to reside here, and have now flowed into Paris; and then a great mass of indifferent or unwilling Parisians, who have been accustomed during the siege to obey military orders. These are, I believe, very

* A man who looks after the sewers.

much disheartened by their losses; and as many as are not entirely demoralized by illness and drinking, regret their honest and better-paid work, but are driven on by their chiefs and the fanatical or ferocious part of their comrades. Fifty or sixty battalions have never recognized the Commune, and do either nothing or guard their own streets. Altogether we are not a "happy family." The great difficulty of our masters now is the money; nobody will take "les bons de la Commune;" and after having robbed les Caisses Publiques, extorted money from the railways and the Bank of France, melted down the plate of the Ministries, the Invalides, the Légion d'Honneur, they are in great distress. They have broken into a certain number of private houses, taken the carriages, and sixty thousand francs worth of wine at the Pereires, stolen Dufaure's money and railway shares under pretext of looking for state papers, wasted Flahauel's and Madame Mathilde's goods and chattels, etc.; but this brings no money. The requisitions from butchers and bakers are answered by shutting up the shops or the market-places. Les Dames de la Halle have kicked out the *délégués*, the Octroi has fallen two-thirds, the Parisian refuses to pay his house-tax to the Commune; but they are in distress for money, and their way of setting about to enrich the world does not appear to be the right one. When this folly shall be exploded we shall find an inconceivable ruin in Paris; and what their impatient madness has cost France in money, in reputation, and in political prospects, is perfectly incalculable. I find that the friends who are yet here are disheartened to the last degree; they believe that France has fallen into the state of Spain or Austria —a helpless log on a sea of revolution; and I find myself, to my own wonder, more French than all of them. I do believe in this nation and its faculty of recovering itself. We all of us are grievously ruined, but the next generation may be more prosperous than we have ever been.

You know the savages have shut up the archbishop and plenty of priests. They don't see that the real crime of this Church is to have brought up such a generation, and to have so entirely failed in their duty of civilizing it; but they are not so stupid as not to see that shooting an archbishop does no harm to the Church they hate. *Au reste*, poor Darboy comes out very poorly in this trial; his fears are absurd, as they will never shoot him, and even if he believes that they will, he shows a shameful want of pluck. But he has been a trimmer all his life, and that is all.

But I must put an end to this long talk. The matter is, *hélas*, superabundant, but it makes me quite melancholy to see these things and to talk of them.

Be so good as to remember me kindly to M. and Madame Laugel and to Anna Dicey, and believe me to be

Yours very sincerely,

J. MOHL.

To Lady William Russell.

(*Translation.*)

Paris, May 4, 1871.

You see we are getting quite frisky in our folly, and have established a "Committee of Public Safety," to remind us of the good old times. Félix Pyat for the moment is our master. I would rather have had some other, but I was not consulted. However, the creation of a Committee of Public Safety seems to me like the dose of musk which is given to patients in their dying moments, or the prayers ordered for kings in their last agony. Amen, so be it! for it is time that this monstrous folly should cease; and yet the army does not appear to be making much progress, or that the National Guard is sufficiently disgusted with the trade forced upon it. There are at least in every battalion a hundred or a hundred and fifty madmen, who fight furiously; the others contrive to linger on the road, and as the Commune, through the folly of Jules Favre, possesses nineteen hundred guns of all sorts of calibre, this condition may last some time longer, because the army acts according to rule, slowly and methodically, and meantime we are "cooking in the devil's oven."

But it is tiresome to be always talking of these things, and yet nothing else happens. We have no new books, no foreign books, or reviews, or newspapers; I read old books, therefore, and am none the worse off. I have fallen upon the "Life and Correspondence of Theodore Parker," an American theologian, whom I remember to have seen at your house years ago. It interests me deeply, but it is too heterodox for you, and you would not care for it. As for me, the old theological leaven is constantly rising, and I like to see how an arch-heretic of this sort behaves in America, and especially how America behaves to him. Speaking of books, the director of the Bibliothèque Nationale, appointed by the Commune, was one Vincent,

by profession an *égoutier*. When he arrived he was shown a great room full of books, and was quite stupefied with astonishment at seeing so many. He wanted to send a battalion of National Guards to guard them. The librarians got rid of him with a great deal of trouble. The Commune has since dismissed him, not for incapacity, but because he was suspected of having made away with money. His successor is a sort of literary man who will be much more inconvenient if he has time to establish himself. ...

Paris, May 7, 1871.

DEAR LADY WILLIAM,

Nothing new. Firing, burning of houses at Neuilly, Colombes, Issy, etc., marching of very dirty battalions of ragamuffins, insane decrees of the Comité de Salut Public, lying telegrams, suppression of all half-truthful papers, and inconceivable dawdling of the Versailles people,—that is *summa summarum* our daily fare in this pestilential place. It is hardly worth while to tell the details, the more so as Oliphant and others undoubtedly tell you much more than I can know. The only decent thing these fellows do is to arrest one another plentifully, as their prototypes of 1792 did; only they do not guillotine one another. However, I am thankful for this, as it keeps them from cutting our throats too, which is a great mercy, as one likes to see the end of this monstrous folly, for which purpose it is useful to keep one's head on one's shoulders. To give the devil his due, the rabble are not so bloodthirsty as their grandfathers were, but also they are as ignorant, as stupid, and as destructive as ever. They want to destroy the Colonne of the Place Vendôme and La Chapelle de Bréa. During this time the Government of Versailles plays at soldiering; they fire at the fortresses and reduce them to powder, but don't take them—just as if the whole was a trial of artillery, and an exercise-ground for the men. It looks as if it were as incapable as the former one. They seem not to feel that this long resistance of the rabble will make any future government insecure, and expose it to perpetual conspiracies and trials of strength. * It seems as if these animals were playing a game of chess, and pondered for two days before moving a pawn. They say it is to save the lives of their soldiers; but they lose more in these eternal cannonades than they would in a sharp attack on the forts and villages in the suburbs. There is a weakness in all this singularly

* Translated from this paragraph.

unlike the old "Furia francese." So much the worse for us, for these slow and, I suppose, regular movements leave us in the hands of madmen—a social position by no means safe, and at best by no means flattering. These pigs have decreed the destruction of the Chapelle Expiatoire, which is one of the most beautiful buildings in Paris. I don't believe that this will be done; but really can it be possible that there are people so idiotic as to believe that the destruction of a certain number of stones would have the effect of rendering everybody happy, rich, contented, and free?—for this is their platform. But I am disgusted with them and all their works, and I will hold my tongue, hoping to have later on a more worthy theme for my discourse.

(*Translation.*)

May 10, 1871.

The days pass, and are like each other. Here is a picture of the situation, with, however, the slight change produced by the pressure of Bismarck, who has sent a more peremptory message to the Government at Versailles to re-enter Paris. They are, therefore, fighting more seriously, the forts are in ruins, and we see that these gentlemen of the Commune lose a great many men. I say the *Commune*, but it appears to be only a screen, behind which our real governors conceal themselves; for the little Parliament at the Hôtel de Ville seems to have no longer any power. Its decrees are not executed, the organization it introduces is overthrown as soon as created, one cannot tell by whom, perhaps by the Committee of the Federation—an anonymous and mysterious authority—or of some other still more occult power. We understand nothing of what goes on, but we see that we are more and more under the power of Dombrowski, Crapulowski, and Co.; and these heroic defenders of our liberties look more and more like bandits as one sees them marching by in battalions. I hope that the end is near, for it really is too tiresome—to use a strictly parliamentary expression.

I came in contact with the Commune yesterday, quite unexpectedly and against my will. A certain French-Chinese bishop, Monseigneur Perny, a sort of *savant*, has published the first volume of a French and Chinese dictionary. He was his own printer, and has worked for the last two years in an apron and paper cap, like an ordinary journeyman at this immortal work. Unluckily for him,

when he went out he donned a wide-brimmed hat with a gold cord; and he wears a gold chain and cross round his neck, with other ecclesiastical frivolities, which prove that he is not a man of sense; for he did not see that if one has the luck to possess an apron and a paper cap, it is not the moment to leave them off, and to put on the Order of the Holy Ghost or such like. In short, he went out in this costume of the age of barbarism and despotism, and was caught in the street by the National Guard, who adore religious liberty, and clapped into the Conciergerie, where he has been kept in secret for the last five or six weeks with other bishops, ready to hand whenever they want to shoot a few to avenge any casualties among the Federates at Versailles. But he has a friend in M. Panthier, an excellent man, enthusiastic for any good action, and, what is more, devoted to Perny; for they have a common enemy, which is the best cement for literary friendship. So this poor Panthier has taken infinite pains to set Perny free. At last a member of the Commune, who says he has no power himself to liberate Perny, advised Panthier to get the Asiatic Society to lay claim to him. The requisition was rather awkwardly drawn up; however, such as it is, he got all the members of the council to sign it, and then it was brought to me to give it my supreme sanction as president. I have added a long postscript, in which I remind the Commune (a fact of which I am sure it is completely ignorant) that the first republic exempted missionaries from all the confiscations and other penalties inflicted on the Church, because the influence of France in the East is kept up chiefly by the missionaries. It is just possible that this may be of use to the poor man in his undeserved misfortune, but I fear not; for arrests are arbitrary, and no one knows by whose orders. Victims are shut up without any reason being alleged, and as the authorities are constantly changing, no one will release a prisoner, precisely because there exists no record of the cause or the suspicion for which he was confined, and in this avalanche of liberty which we are now enjoying it is guilt, and not innocence, which is presupposed.

P.S.—The Versailles people hope to come in on Saturday or Sunday. They have organized a company of a thousand National Guards who have taken refuge at Versailles, and who will enter at the head of the troops—at least so it is said.

Paris, May 14, 1871.

DEAR LADY WILLIAM,

Many thanks for your letters and stamps (of those you and Odo have sent me forty-two single and six double ones, so I owe you fifty-four stamps, which shall be honestly paid; I was sadly in need of them, but feel now like a miniature Crœsus in stamps). Le Père Houbigant shall be ferreted out of some dark hole, which he and his *compères* are in the habit of living in. About the "Science de la Nature par Magia" (?) I know nothing, having never heard of the man or the book.

Lord Houghton may come here without the slightest difficulty. These barbarians are uncommonly civil to strangers; but he will find the place very dull and dreary. A siege seems to be the most tiresome affair for both parties—certainly to the besieged, as I can testify. We all become so stupid, lose our memories, repeat always the same thing; many become quite idiotic, and some rave outright. If it should last, they would at the end find a lot of imbeciles instead of madmen. But Lord H. has a morbid taste, and wants to indulge it. I don't know if the besiegers at Versailles are much wiser; they will certainly drive Thiers crazy, and we cannot spare him now, as the empire has left us stranded without any political men of any note, and the lawyers we have got in their place do not shine by administrative qualities.

The beasts have now emitted an *ukase*, that every one of us is to take a *carte de sûreté*, which every armed ragamuffin in the street is empowered to ask to see, and if you have not got it, to arrest you. I won't take any, as I do not recognize their right to command me, and I will rather remain at home until the devil has got them, which I hope will be shortly. When one hears the furious cannonade, one should think the walls must be pulverized; but it seems not yet to be so. I fell in yesterday, in a boat on the Seine, with a National Guard, who came just home from one of the forts; he told me he had been there for eighteen days, that his company had marched out one hundred and thirty-four strong, but that he had left only eight in the fort, the rest killed, wounded, prisoners, or run away. The wonder is they find people to fight under these conditions. But there is a lot of fanatic socialists who keep up the game, and, what is strange, a lot of furious women, who are in an exaltation of insane communism,

which passes all belief; they fill every evening the churches, which are converted from six o'clock into club-rooms, mount on the pulpit-chair, and hold forth enormous nonsense and make ferocious propositions.

May 17.

Le Père Houbigant has hid his diminished head very much, and is not to be found when he is wanted. However, I have commissioned a little bookseller's boy, the veriest ferret of books, who will hunt him up.

Nothing new here as far as I know; but I have not been out, and do not even know if the hogs have yesterday destroyed the Colonne Vendôme, and if anything of poor Thiers' house is standing. His collections of art have been packed up very rudely; much must have been broken, much will be stolen and dispersed. The rest he will find again, as they will not be able or dare to sell it. But Thiers feels it most bitterly, and it is an unexpected consequence of his having fortified Paris.

Yesterday the beasts have forced la Société Générale to pay over to them all the private deposits; this ruins the Asiatic Society. During thirty years I had accumulated these £4000 of savings for her, and now it seems to be gone. These are the friends of liberty who are to inaugurate a new civilization!

Paris, May 18, 1871.

We get madder every day as the end approaches. These fellows arrest one another all round, publish newspapers against one another. The wonderful thing is that they can keep up the fighting; it is true this is not under the direction of the Commune, but seems to be governed by a certain mysterious Comité Central. One does not see now, as formerly, an inconceivable number of disorderly-looking National Guards loafing about. There must be now many thousands on or near the ramparts to resist the army, which is evidently breaching the walls, to judge from the noise all along the horizon. But the difficulties seem to be very great; the army advances only slowly. Thiers' house was half destroyed yesterday. The savages deliberate if they are to sell his collections or incorporate them in the collection of the state. I hope they will do the last, as then he will find them again. The Colonne Vendôme is to be blown up to-day; but I do not believe it. What a strange thing, that this monument of battles and

victories should be destroyed as a monument of barbarism by the veriest dregs of the population, who has sung for fifty years, "Qu'on est fier d'être Français, quand on regarde la Colonne!" I approve the new sentiment, but they might show it in a more sensible way than they do. But this nation is unaccountable when its Celtic element gets the uppermost.

Yesterday they have named a new member du Comité de Salut Public, le citoyen Billioray. This citizen was formerly a wandering musician, playing in court-yards, public gardens, and in *cabarets*, accompanied by his children. He is now one of the five absolute masters.

Auber, the musician, is dead; he died making a new opera. But I know nothing worth telling, and this is only to prove that the Comité de Salut Public has not yet taken notice of me; but if the illustrious Billioray should know my sentiments on his favourite art and bread-winner, it will go hard with me. *En attendant*,

I am, dear Lady William,

Yours most gratefully,

J. MOHL.

Paris, May 20, 1871.

You are very kind to try to charm me back to London, and if I had known that this madness would last two months, as it has done, I should most likely have had the weakness of leaving this Bedlam for more reasonable countries; but as I hear the army knocking so hard at the doors all day and night, and as I expect them every day to come in, it is not worth while; and just now it is not very easy to get out of this *fournaise* of folly, brutality, and savageness. When it is all over, without my having been shot in revenge for some true or factitious murder committed by the Versaillois, I shall be glad to have remained, because it is a state of things which one is, happily, not likely to witness twice. I have seen 1848, which was mad enough, but only a type of this. But there is a more sensible reason than mere curiosity for remaining here. The scoundrels are much given to break into abandoned apartments under pretext of looking for arms or papers, and rifling the place. They do not so in inhabited houses. To give you an example. Before yesterday they came to No. 31, Rue Grenoble, quite in my

neighbourhood, a big corner house, whose proprietor, le Marquis de Creu—I forget his name—is absent; they brought thirty wounded, opened the apartment, established an ambulance. The porter, after an hour, came up to see what was doing, found them breaking the locks of the drawers and rifling them. He protested, was arrested, and sent with his wife to the Conciergerie. They put a National Guard in his lodge, and made themselves comfortable in the house, the cellar, and everything pertaining to the man.

Now they have taken to reform the marriage laws; to declare legitimate all the unlegitimately born young citizens; to abolish most of the rules about contracting marriages; to give pensions to the unlawful spouses of the National Guards, etc. They again threaten the archbishop, who is very much frightened; but I don't believe that they will have the stupidity of shooting him. As to my poor Chinese bishop, I have not heard of him, so that I suppose our intercession has been of no avail, as I thought from the beginning.

The streets are more deserted than ever. More people get out of town by Saint Denis. One sees nothing but women in black, old men, begging children, and armed ragamuffins; at night even the best streets are very dimly lighted, Thiers not allowing coal to come in; wood is, of course, very rare. I have just bought some for more than double its usual price. Milk has become an almost incredible tradition of former times, and Thiers don't allow concentrated milk to come in. The doctors asked him for it, but he said in a very few days there would be plenty; only these days lengthen to weeks insensibly, and babies and sick folk want milk. They begin to starve us in the matter of meat. Yesterday a drove of oxen came to Saint Denis, which the Prussians occupy; but the police is in the hands of unarmed French *gens d'armes.* These opposed the entrance of the cattle until the drovers fell upon them, gave them a good beating, and brought in their cattle in triumph.

But all this is nothing; our trouble is to live in the midst of this unutterable folly of our masters, which is humiliating to the last degree. I listen with delight to the incessant noise of the mitrailleuse which rises up from the Bois de Boulogne, and to the bass of the cannon at Montretout; only I find that the result of this onslaught is very long coming. Perhaps you may hear of it before you get this scrawl.

Paris, May 24, 1871, eight o'clock, night.

I will try to send you this sign of life, if I can go as far as the embassy to-morrow; it would be impossible to-day, and may be so to-morrow. You know more about Paris at this moment than I, as I have been kept at home during this three days' fighting, which was long and bitter in the Rue du Bac, quite against my expectation. In general I did not believe that these scoundrels would fight in the town; but the number of foreign republicans, of *forçats libérés*, of riffraff indigenous, was so great, and these gentry were so convinced that they would be shot anyhow, that they fought like devils. Many dead were found with large sums in their pockets. An officer told me that he had himself to count the contents of the pockets of a Pole, and found a hundred and fifty thousand francs in billets of the bank, to his great astonishment. The Pole was shot; so are all foreigners and all deserters from the army who are caught with arms in their hands. There is yet much fighting. I hear the cannon from the Place St. Sulpice and from the Hôtel de Ville. The battle is won; this infernal *racaille* is put down. But they are during this time burning all the public establishments, ministries, barracks, post-office, the Tuileries, and people say the Louvre! La Caisse des Comptes, la Légion d'Honneur, seem to be burned, and I see on the east side of my horizon this moment five enormous conflagrations. Oh, the beasts! This moment somebody comes in to tell me that the *drapeau tricolore* has just been hoisted on St. Sulpice; but a part of the beasts is yet on the roof of the building firing down on the square. They put powder-casks in every establishment they occupied, aspersed it all over with petroleum, and fired it in leaving.

During two days we have been shelled by these brutes. The shells came first from Montmartre, and afterwards most likely from Vincennes; the whizzing was very frequent, and they fell on the houses, but mostly in the gardens, bursting there with a great crash. One broke a window in my staircase, and strewed about its fragments in the court-yard. But shells are not very formidable, except in wooden houses, or where they are directed on one place.

Nine o'clock.

St. Sulpice is burning, but they are extinguishing the fire; the Hôtel de Ville is said to be in flames, but the rascals fire yet out of

it. The women are the most mad of all. They had formed three battalions, and many have been taken and some shot. A woman on the place St. Sulpice gave thirty soldiers wine to drink which was poisoned. She was arrested, to see what the consequences might be on the soldiers. There is a heavy canopy of smoke over Paris, and the sun shone all day feebly through it. I have tried just now to go out and look about me, but all circulation is interdicted by sentries. There is a fearful cannonade somewhere in the town; I hear the reverberation of it twice in a minute; I don't know where it may be. However, we are rid of this beastly herd of hogs, and that is so far good; whatever may come afterwards, it cannot be so bad and so shameful as what we have seen and suffered. I have now been unable to get a messenger during three days; have not talked to a human being but soldiers and *portiers* in the street. We are living on what is accidentally in the house, as nothing can be bought. We feed on the monstrous things we see, and on the more monstrous tales we hear; and, instead of conversing, we listen to the incessant roar of cannon and guns. However, I must say I do hear it with great pleasure, as we can be in no otherwise delivered.

The firing from the Panthéon and from la Place de la Concorde is perfectly fearful, and has now lasted uninterruptedly for nearly two hours. I suppose these are the last posts held by the savages, and that they will be taken to-night at any cost, not to allow the scoundrels to set fire again to the town.

Thursday, 25th, six o'clock in the morning.

All right, as it seems. No cannon-shot to be heard, except from Bicêtre, where the scoundrels may yet hold the fort. The town seems entirely free. *A la fin!* I will try to make my way to the embassy to bring this there, that you may see that nothing has happened to

Your very grateful *serviteur*,

J. MOHL.

From Julius to Mary Mohl.

Paris, May 26.

MY DEAR M——,

I am just come from the embassy. They promise to send a letter to you and one to Flo to-day, and even one to Moritz, to be posted at Versailles. The gates of Paris are almost hermeti-

cally closed, because they want to arrest that vermin the Commune and the Comité Central. I hope they may. Haman's gallows are too low for them; but I would send them to Cayenne to open trenches for draining the colony, and with them about twelve thousand of their rascally followers; but my impression is that they will be shot by the soldiers as soon as they can be identified.

I found at the embassy a letter of yours, dated the 19th, with one from Florence.

The state of the town is indescribable. At every *carrefour* there had been barricades, of which the remnants fill the streets; the pavement is frequently covered with dried or drying blood, the houses battered and half-ruinous; at every corner a sentry, who orders you to walk in the middle of the street that you may not be able to throw petroleum in the houses. I did not understand what the first sentry told me, and crossed over to the opposite pavement; but he reiterated his orders and threatened to shoot me, which quickened my dull understanding. It would really be ignominious to have been shot as a suspected incendiary. I found the state of the Rue Royale incredible. At the corner of the Rue St. Honoré all the houses are burned. The one in which was the *bureau des omnibus* has entirely disappeared and the ruins are yet smoking. Opposite is one so burned out that the façade has fallen; another is in so dangerous a state that nobody is allowed to go near it. The entrance of the Faubourg St. Honoré is entirely inaccessible; the fallen houses have covered it with a wall of perhaps thirty feet high. I made a *détour* by the Madeleine, and, coming back in the Faubourg St. Honoré, found the hotel of Péreire very much damaged by cannon; cart-loads of hewn stone had fallen in the street from its façade.

At the English embassy there was, of course, nothing injured. Coming back, I wanted to go along the Quai d'Orsay, and could not, because the façade of the Cour des Comptes was too unsafe. I have since been at the Institut, which has been saved by the merest accident; and this very night the scoundrels, who yet bombard Paris from the Buttes-Chaumont and the Faubourg St. Antoine, set fire by a petroleum shell to the Bibliothèque Mazarine. Happily there was an *employé*, who, hearing the crash, went up in the roof and was able to stamp out the fire. We were seven members; our sitting was not long. M. de Wailly told me a story which had happened

at Passy, where he is living, and, thinking the incident impossible, he had gone to the witness, a man he knows as trustworthy. They had taken a woman in a barricade, her hands black with smoke, and they were carrying her away with the others. She had a child with her. All at once she drew out a revolver, shot the child, and said to the soldiers, "Canailles, j'ai tué trois de vous, c'est mon tour maintenant, faites votre métier." She was sent with the rest to Versailles, which is done only in cases where great numbers are taken, else they are shot instantly. M. de Wailly told another story, which I repeat, because he is a pedantically exact man. The Curé d'Auteuil told him that a woman had called on him and put in his hand a necklace of fine pearls and some other baubles, coming from Thiers' hotel, and told him that Dombrowski had taken her son as secretary, and, in taking leave of him the day before yesterday, told him that he had no money to give him, but he might take these things.

I came back by the quai; but when I came to the entrance of the Rue du Bac, I found an enormous barricade, over which Mérimée's house had tumbled, closing up the street with a ruin of thirty feet high. The whole offered a dismal spectacle. All that part of the Rue de Lille, between the Rue du Bac and the Rue Solférino, on both sides is one mass of ruins. The Hôtel St. Aignan has entirely disappeared, the others are wrecks burned out, half the walls fallen, the rest black and tottering. They had all been absolutely covered by petroleum pumped upon them. The Croix Rouge is in the same state. Four houses had been entirely burned by being covered with petroleum, some others are shattered to pieces from cannon-balls. The ruins are yet smoking, and the firemen stand upon them, directing streams of water on this boiling mass. The façades stand yet in part without any back, and may at any moment crush the firemen, who stand behind and beside them. It is fearful. The inhabitants had five minutes to save their valuables. The national printing-office is untouched, because the director had a friend in the Commune, and got through him an order to the Commune to take all necessary precautions to save the establishment. The archives have been saved by similar means. The Communaux went to the Luxemburg and covered all the staircases with petroleum; and, as it had been turned into an hospital there, they told the doctor to have his patients removed. He said he could remove two hundred, but there were three hundred more who could not be transported. Oh, they

said, then they must perish; and as they are to die anyhow, it is of no consequence. However, they decided to send for orders to the Hôtel de Ville; and before they got them, the troops arrived and shot the Communaux.

While I am writing, the whole of the horizon is again red with fire; it is an enormous conflagration in the interior of the town. According to the direction, it may be Le Mont de Piété or the printing-office, but it is impossible from this spot to distinguish. They wanted to blow up Notre Dame and the Panthéon, but had not time. The Panthéon was saved by the great courage of an officer, who went down in the crypt and stamped out the burning slow match. They had made great preparations to blow up the *égouts* (sewers), and accumulated three enormous quantities of powder and explosive materials—*nitrate de potasse*, etc. This had been bruited about already a fortnight ago, and people went down in the *égouts* and cut the metal wires which were to be fixed by electricity from the Hôtel de Ville. They found there fifteen incendiaries stifled by their own preparations and devilish materials. It passes all human belief. The state of despair in which all this puts the French is inconceivable. Renan called yesterday, striking his forehead, tearing his hair, declaring that Paris was incurably idiotic. They all fear a civil war all over France. *He* believes in the re-establishment of the Bonapartes.

About a dozen of the members of the Commune have been taken and shot; the officers do not like to send them to Versailles, to be carried before the tribunals in which they have no confidence. An aide-de-camp told me this to-day, with whom I was talking in the street, because now everybody talks with every one, while during the last two months people were silent and mistrusting. This aide-de-camp said, "What can you do? Since our soldiers see the burning houses they are become furious; and then many of them have been poisoned. We give no orders; but the officer who commands a detachment does as he thinks right, and we ask no questions. We are not bloodthirsty, and are heartily sick of all this; but, when I came along the Rue du Bac, a fellow was brought by a bourgeois to the *poste*, who accused him of being an incendiary; he had a big can in his hand. I was appealed to. I assured myself that it was full of petroleum, and told them they might shoot him or carry him to the barracks. They put him against the wall and shot him, he clutching till after his death the can in his hand. If

the fellow had been sent to Versailles, who would have proved to a tribunal that all this was really so, and no mistake? Most likely he would have got off." In this way Paris is become a charnel-house, and these house-burners will cost the Fédérés many thousands of lives. I believe every officer of theirs who is taken is shot (there are above ten thousand in their army); so is every foreigner and every deserter. The Prussians arrest every suspicious body who is caught in their lines; formerly they disarmed them, and made prisoners of them, now they give them up as incendiaries. I suppose the military tribunals will condemn to death a great number, and Government will send them to colonize Cayenne and New Caledonia.

Saturday, May 27.

I hear no firing, but I know that the Buttes de Chaumont are not taken. It rains, which must deaden the sound of cannon; and I suppose the remains of the communists will be assembled there in the Faubourg St. Antoine as in a net; they may yet be twenty thousand, future colonists for Cayenne. Twelve thousand are at Versailles; as many may have perished here in these six days of battle. Most likely many hundreds, perhaps thousands, of poor fellows have perished, who were forced by the brutes to fight against their wish. I have no time to tell the monstrous stories of this kind which everybody tells. Whenever one touches this subject one finds the most monstrous things. I saw yesterday, in the court-yard of the Institut, a big cannon standing in a corner; it was brought in from a barricade near the court-yard. The court-yard was strewn over with empty tin cans, which had contained petroleum. The marines (of the army) had hoisted a mortar up on the roof (on a gallery running about the clock) to fire from there on the Hôtel de Ville. The filth and the stench in the whole place is indescribable. In the crypts of St. Thomas d'Acquin eight thousand incendiary bombs have been found. Every moment the horrors one hears increase in number and atrocity. Whenever they had ecclesiastic hostages they told them they might go and shoot them as they came out in the court-yards. The Dominicans, the *frères ignorantins*, the Jesuits, were shot. Nobody knows where the archbishop, the other bishops, and l'Abbé Guerry may be, or if they are shot. In the Rue Royale they have burnt one *maison d'accouchement*,

and thirty-eight women in it; it passes all human belief. Will the nations of Europe comprehend that, instead of making war one with another, they have not too much means, time, and intelligence to resist the savage classes which have been forming under their feet, and to civilize them? We send missionaries to the Hindoos and Chinese instead of taking care of the street Arabs; but you will see that in a year or two they will have forgotten the fearful lesson, just as they have forgotten the war now, although the Prussians occupy half the Contour de la Ville. They will then quarrel as ardently about some miserable interest of the moment as if there was no volcano under their feet.

Three o'clock.

Cannonade from the Buttes de Chaumont. These fellows fight with a cord round their necks. It will have taken exactly a week to retake the town. We are yet in a very poor condition; no omnibus, hardly a *fiacre*, as the streets are seldom repaved. Until now no markets, because the market people have difficulties in coming in, and very much greater ones in getting out, because Government wants to hinder the leaders from escaping in disguise. The post don't go yet. They say one may carry a letter to the Chemin de Fer de la Rue St. Lazare, and that it will go off from there; but even if this should be true, it is a poor remedy, in the state of the street and the distance of the *gare*. I believe it will require a week before the town is inhabitable, but then nothing will oppose your return. Your carpets are put down, and you will find everything in its place, except poor puss. When I saw that the danger of pillage was over, I collected together the money, papers, and plate I had hid, to have all under my hand in case of fire; but this danger, too, is rapidly passing away, as the whole population is watchful about it to a degree which it is difficult to imagine. I believe nobody, but certainly no woman, could carry a bottle or any such vessel in a street where she is unknown without danger. All the openings of cellars or *sous-sols* all over the town are built up with sacks full of earth, or plastered over, or fortified with a wall of paving-stones. The fury of a frightened population is quite ferocious, and, really, the shooting off-hand of people who carry no arms is a real public danger, and of very bad example.

Five o'clock.

The firing goes on. I wonder that these last quarters can hold out so long, although their barricades are very formidable. In the Palais Royal the palace is entirely burnt; the great fire I saw yesterday down in the city is the Entrepôt de la Villette; it has been burning two days, full of millions of merchandise. Decaisne has just sent a man to inquire if I was alive. I have invited him to dinner for Monday. The museum has not been burnt. If Paris was not built as it is, it would have been burnt down entirely; but it is incombustible, or nearly so. The firing from Montmartre on les Buttes de Chaumont and Belleville increases very fast; they (that is, the army) have mounted on Montmartre a battery of heavy ship cannon. What a misery well-meaning people in those quarters must suffer between the two! Most people I see are become so restless they gad about without any purpose, only from being unable to keep in any place. On me it has another effect; it makes me thirsty to an incredible degree. I never drink between meals; but now it is as if I was devoured by an interior fire, and I drink water all day long. I certainly expected a violent *coup de queue*, but for this pillage and this horrible incendiarism I was not prepared.

May 29.

It is all over. I have no time to write about it to-day.

Julius Mohl to Lady William Russell.

Paris, La Sainte Pentecôte, May 28, 1871.

The firing in the interior of the town goes on—we do not know exactly what progress is making; but, in fact, the beasts are yet retrenched in north-east quarters of the town, and bombard us with incendiary shells. It is most likely the most desperate set which has from everywhere concentrated there; however, they are surrounded and must be taken; the people in the streets say that they are twenty thousand strong, and it is not unlikely, since they have now held out for three days. There are twenty-eight to thirty thousand prisoners at Versailles, most likely ten thousand have perished in the battle, or been shot afterwards, and so the town is certainly delivered of a good number of *canailles;* but there will never be security in a city where these beasts have found hundreds of men, women, and boys who undertook to set fire to the town for a payment of ten

francs, and did all they could to execute their commission. Many, very many of them, have been shot, *mais la graine n'est pas perdue et repoussera vite.* The army has come in slowly, else it would have saved most of the public buildings. The intention of the generals was to attack the wall only four days later, but a civil engineer, whose name I could not learn, inside the town perceived that by some error, or negligence, or disobedience, the bastion of the door of Auteuil was not occupied by the communists; he made signs to the sentries of the army, who fired at him, but he with heroic courage persisted, until an officer sent two men on the *bord du fossé* to hear what he had to say. They returned to the officer, who went to his colonel, who sent to his general, who wrote to MacMahon, who combined there an attack, and although three mortal hours had been lost, the relief troops of the Fédérés had not yet come. If these old pedants of generals, who went on firing and making approaches according to the *manuel du siège des places fortes*, had not been forced in this way to come in, we should all have been first robbed and then roasted, and certainly no public building would have escaped. These old pedants went on battering every barricade and every house occupied by the beasts with cannon, and in this way took a week to get the town in their hands, which they ought to have got in a day or two, having a hundred thousand men at their disposal.

The communists are now hunted down all over the town; nobody is allowed to leave it, and of course the denunciations are going at a great rate. Very often one sees a crowd in the street, and when one asks what the matter is, the answer is constantly, "So-and-so is to be arrested, and we want to see him brought out." Any member of the Commune or any of their *délégués*, any member of the Comité Central, any superior officer of their army, is shot off-hand as soon as he is identified; the officers have no confidence in the tribunals, and take justice in their own hands since the burnings. And this is natural enough; but it is a most dangerous precedent for new revolutions, which we certainly shall not escape. What a country this is!

Thiers' influence in the Assembly seems on the wane, which I am sorry for. I am not a great admirer of his, but he is the best man we have, perhaps the only one who can pull through the incredible difficulties of this land, ruined, occupied by five hundred thousand enemies, disorganized and demoralized, profoundly divided in

opinions, with incapable parties, who hardly know what they want, but always combining against the one who wants to take the lead. I believe this revolt of Paris has cost more than the whole contribution for the war, and has been politically and morally much more destructive.

May 29.

It has been all over at eight o'clock.

The remnant of the beasts surrendered unconditionally; four *cours-martiales* will judge them.

Paris, June 1, 1871.

DEAR LADY WILLIAM,

We are very quiet here, and no wonder, after the indiscriminate shooting all over the town during last week. People calculate that fourteen thousand persons have been killed in that week, and at Versailles they pretend that during the two months' siege the rebels have lost thirty-five thousand men, killed or wounded. I do not know how they get at the numbers; if it is true, most of these must be dead, as their wounded died in great quantities, their doctors being few and bad. They have fought like wild beasts, but unskilfully, as the generals say; the losses of the army are very moderate. It was altogether a hideous sight. I am not sorry to have witnessed such a thing *once*, but have no wish to see it again. The town is, of course, now full of the most monstrous stories of wonderful escapes and of heroic resistances; the last are seldom authentic. The rail to Versailles is now perfectly open; people say that is a trap for the communist compromise, who will rush out of town and be recognized and arrested at the *gares*. I do not know if this *ruse de sauvages* is true, but one may expect everything from the rage and reaction into which we have fallen, after our prostration under the feet of the beasts. Really, the Parisians in general have not shown to their advantage in defeat or in victory.

Outside people must have thought that we had all perished. I have got this morning a telegram from St. Petersburg, and one from Constantinople, to inquire if I am alive. And here, too, people who see one another for the first time greet one another as if they had been shipwrecked, or risen from their graves. I was walking yesterday in the street; a man stopped me, seized my hand, and shook my arm almost out of the socket. I did not recognize him, but he told

me he was one of the garçons des bureaux de l'Imprimerie Nationale. He would no more have thought at any other time to shake me by the hand than to seize the moon with his teeth, but he was so delighted to see one of his old masters as to be almost crazy.

June 3.

Everything is now quiet, and shakes itself slowly in its place under the government of a dozen of generals. I fell in with one of them yesterday, an old acquaintance, who says that they cannot administer the town; that they are assailed by denunciations, but refuse to act upon them; they want the *maires* and the police to act, and those do very little; that they make very terrible proclamations about the giving up of arms, but with moderate success. He told me that in his district the Commune had distributed at least twenty-two thousand guns, and yesterday only six thousand had been brought in; a few thousand have been taken in the fight, but more than half are concealed. So they are driven to house-to-house examinations, which furnish a good number with great trouble, but by far not all that is required. He told me that it was not ordered, but understood, that during the battle every man taken with arms should be shot; but *he* would not allow it, and sent every prisoner to the Châtelet, where a court-martial disposed of them; but that now there had set in an unreasonable reaction of pity, and that they had not the patience to go into every man's case; they were sick of the indiscriminate shooting that had gone on, and would now let loose many of the most criminal ones. "In fact, we want *patience*, consequently we want *justice*." I dare say it is true; but even if all the ringleaders should be shot or colonized, there will be no want of new ones, as all this working population is deeply imbued with the *unhealthy* doctrines of the international union, and there will easily be found broken-down newspaper-writers, artists, and ambitious workmen to head new conspiracies, and, above anything else, direct the elections which our insane universal suffrage has thrown into incapable hands.

We shall, I hope, have some years of quiet; but this is not certain, because the Assembly at Versailles is a most unmanageable body. It is very important that there should be no new elections now, and that the provisional state should last until the Germans have been paid and have left the country; but nobody knows if the irrecon-

cilable members of the Assembly may not bring on new general elections.

These rascals have done much to ruin us all, and have very well gone on with what the empire and Master Gambetta had so well begun; but directly they have stolen from me only one thing, and the one which I might have least expected, viz. a copy of the *Evangiles!* I had a copy of a very fine edition in folio, which I wanted to send to the Athenæum, and sent it to the national printing-office to be bound there, as they bind there uncommonly well. When they left the establishment, on the troops coming in, the volume was missing; one of these pious people had annexed it. I will look out for another copy, and not be baulked by these beasts. But is it not queer?

I have no more to say; my head is addled. I ought to go to Petersthal to quiet my liver, but I learn just now that the Empress of Russia has discovered this very obscure spot of the world, and goes there at the end of this month. Now, there has never been room enough for the guests in that place; how are they to live when such a big animal comes, with a hundred attendants of all sizes and pretensions? It is out of the question, and I must wait until it has pleased H. I. M. to decamp. It is disheartening to see these people come like a thunderclap or a Commune—fall on honest and bilious people and oust them. Why cannot they be contented with Carlsbad, Toëplitz, or Ems, which are places arranged for such big whales and mammoths? I shall certainly turn communist if the princes go on in this way.

I am, dear madame,
Yours very gratefully,
J. MOHL.

Madame Mohl's delight was intense when the Dean and Lady Augusta, at the earliest possible moment, offered to take her to Paris. The Dean told me that her joy on arriving was almost childish. She skipped about, and was quite happy at being obliged to walk nearly all the way to the Rue du Bac. A few days afterwards she wrote to me—

Monday, June 13, 1871.

DEAR MINNIE,

I should have written last week if my poverty (of strength), but not my will, had not governed me—like the poor apothecary in "Romeo and Juliet," for whom I have often felt as much compassion, by-the-by, as for the lovers. I was all the week overdone with fatigue. We arrived here at one in the morning, and got to bed at three. My poor spouse looks wretchedly; he had waited from half-past eight to near twelve at the railroad, then he went back. We got there at past twelve, tried in vain to get a coach, and at length, leaving the luggage, set out on foot along the dark muddy streets; yet we were all three as merry as crickets, and felt no fatigue. As we trudged along we called to every wheeled thing we could discern, but they were obdurate; at last a little omnibus, which was plying to some station, was persuaded to bring us here. We were all curiosity to see the ruins; but, after all, they were not half so numerous as we expected; but on crossing the Carrousel the Tuileries were invisible. True, it was very dark, and the town is as yet lighted like the small country towns. We did spy every now and then a monstrous heap of stones. Our porter opened the ponderous door much sooner than I expected, and we got upstairs and ate our dinner very merrily at two in the morning. Mr. Mohl, however, seemed impervious to all fun, and looked like a man who had been hung and cut down before his last gasp. He was better next morning, and a story of an absurd old cracked, conceited French crittur, who, being very ill, proposed to Lady Augusta to have her photograph on the same card with his, made the house ring with his old laugh, and did his liver more good than twenty doctors. He knew the man well, and she tells a humorous story incomparably; this crittur had also the impudence to ask her to marry him. This is twenty years ago. He was the laughing-stock of all Paris, and the people encouraged him because he was so ridiculous. The Stanleys came just at the right time to see things before they began to be mended. They went all over the town to see the ruins, Tuesday; to the ceremony of the archbishop at Notre Dame, Wednesday; and on Thursday to the famous sitting at Versailles, where Thiers made a speech of two hours, which I think has settled people's minds for a time as to his political faith and conduct. There seemed to me a *bonne foi* (frankness) in it, and it is thought very

new in a French chief. I was too weak to go to any of these. On Friday they made a tour outside of the town in a coach to see the most fighting places, Neuilly, Bellevue. On Saturday they left at seven, so I think they made a good use of their time. On Friday I went out for the first time to see an old friend, who talked such nonsense about the Prussians that I made up my mind I would go no more to see her. *They* had begun the petroleum system, according to her, and paid the insurgents, while, in fact, the Prussians wanted to disarm them. I have now made up my mind, when people are so nonsensical, not to answer, but to march off and see them no more. My old friend Josephine dined here yesterday, and was not unreasonable at all. Mignet came to see me yesterday. I was delighted and touched, and had tears in my eyes; he is beautiful now in his age as in his youth. Of course one talks of nothing but politics. My poor old friend M. Roulin looks ten years older than Mignet, and is eight years younger. Nothing strikes me more than the alteration in the people's faces and deportments. One of my maids, about twenty, is grown so thin and hollow-faced it is fearful; the other is exactly the same. The porter hid himself in the cellar and would never open the door, the consequence is he looks extremely well; I may say better. Cowardice is a healthy regimen. People are coming back to town; but we shall not be *the Paris* till the government leaves Versailles and returns here—at least that is my opinion; but I don't know what the Chamber thinks. There is certainly a strong looking up in the older party.

Adieu, dear; kind remembrances to your spouse.

M. MOHL.

Julius Mohl to Lady William Russell.

Paris, 120, Rue du Bac, June 15, 1871.

DEAR LADY WILLIAM,

I have not written for some time, because my right hand had become so stiff and rebellious as to make it almost impossible for me to make anything but straight and unreadable scratches. I believe it is my liver complaint which exasperates my nerves. And then I had nothing to say; the picturesque part of our history is, happily, for the moment over; we had enough of it and to spare. The town fills up gradually with returning inhabitants, who come in about twenty thousand a day; and it fills up with horses, drays, and

waggons, but hardly a private carriage is seen, and the shops complain bitterly that their best customers have not returned. It now appears that there were between fifty and sixty thousand workmen sworn in to the International Union, and about as many were republicans, not socialists; about twenty thousand were killed during the siege and the taking of the town; about fifty thousand fought in the streets, of whom thirty thousand were made prisoners. They will be treated leniently, as even court-martials get sick of shooting people. However, the leaders will not escape, and the fry will be sent with their families to colonize New Caledonia, and perhaps Guyana.

But all our political life is now at Versailles, and even there is suspended to wait for the new elections, which will mostly be republican. How anybody can pretend to govern a country with universal suffrage I cannot see, and nobody with any sense, even the republicans, does see; but nobody knows of a remedy without civil war.

There is no coalition between the Orleans and Henri V. Whatever the Legitimists may say, you may be assured that there is none, nor will be. There are five distinct parties, all irreconcilable, and at most two would coalesce in a given case. And then the financial difficulties are enormous—twenty millions of pounds of new taxes, and seven millions of *économies*. All this is added to the very great difficulties of remodelling the army, the administration, and everything.

But I wish to have to talk of something else.

Literary work is beginning again here, and I am very busy after my long idleness, only we have all lost our memories, and I have become slightly idiotic. It was seldom the uneasiness of one's personal security which was the cause of this mental depression, as the danger of an unobtrusive individual in a large town is never very great; but the cessation of all civil life, and the feeling of living in an enormous madhouse where the patients had overpowered the keepers, and where the most dangerous of the insane were the masters, and kept plastering the walls with their wild decrees and lying despatches, was intolerable. This plastering of *affiches* was incessant, and I learnt at the printing-office that there alone they had consumed five thousand reams of *papier d'affiches*. The walls of thousands of houses were covered by successive pastings with a sort of pasteboard, which was never torn down by *chiffonniers*, because they were all in the National Guard, and their families were paid and rationed by the Com-

mune. Since the troops have come in they have taken off their uniforms and taken to their *crochet* and *hotte*, and are going about their old vocation. I have been interrupted by Lanfrey, a member of the Assembly, who is very well, and getting fat during his legislative labours (this is not for your, but for Mrs. Arthur's, edification). He says that the Assembly is incapable of doing much, as the numerous parties in it paralyze all decisive action, which I think is the best that can happen in the state of the country. Anything decisive would produce a civil war between the town and the country people, such is the distracted state of this unfortunate nation; first a foreign war, then a servile war, and in prospect a war between town and country, all having been either directly brought on or secretly fostered by that beastly Bonaparte. *Anathema sit*, as the pope says. Is it not strange that Trochu, who is an honest and clever man, and who has suffered more than anybody from calumnies, should now accuse Bismarck of being at the bottom of this affair of the Commune, which was so evidently against the interest of the Germans, and which Bismarck wished to prevent by disarming the National Guard, which was resisted by Jules Favre? It is surpassingly strange. But I am at the end of my paper, and must say good-bye.

I am, dear Lady William,

Yours very gratefully,

J. MOHL.

From Madame Mohl.

Paris, June 28, 1871.

DEAREST MINNIE,

Mr. Mohl has marched off with your book* into his den, and says, "Rien n'est curieux comme ce livre, il ne pouvait paraître plus à propos on dirait que plusieurs de ces conversations ont eu lieu hier." Now, he is by no means an exaggerator, only, his taste being far before that of the public, I always mistrust that stupid animal when he likes anything very much. Up to this time he has met with nothing that can be taken amiss by Thiers; fact is, Thiers was nobody just then, as he did not come forward much in 1848, except just at the moment before poor Louis Philippe gave up the game like a goose.

Rain seems to have undisputed empire here; but as to the fever

* Seniors Conversations with Thiers, Guizot, etc.

and dead bodies and dangers I was threatened with, it is perfect nonsense. The streets are crammed with people; everybody is in black, but that is the chief difference. I have not seen any one in colours. The shops have nothing but black bonnets, except a flower or so to show it's not private mourning. It's really curious.

Paris, July 1, 1871 (alas, how time flies!).

I purpose going on the 5th, so you see I shall be in London a week before your party; but I write immediately, knowing well the sacredness of dinners. I can add a little more to Mr. Mohl's opinion of the book. He says, "Il vient à point et est extrêmement interressant, et montrera aux gens qu'ils ont tout oublié." It shows how this last revolution was cooking then. For my part, I think this last has been useful, showing what these socialists are. They had not time to show all their *agrément* in 1848; they have shown now what they can do towards the destruction of civilization, and their way of furthering the interests of humanity. I am shocked to see how easy the English take it, because it shows how the venom there has taken hold of a large portion. We talked about sending the book to Thiers (who is incapable of reading it), but Mr. Mohl is not quite sure that he will not be told by some one that Mr. Senior says *he*, Thiers, is a socialist. I don't remember seeing it, and will look out for the passage. I should not wonder at all, but he has learnt better since; however, he is a very important element of tranquillity just now, and I should be very sorry if he came to any harm, for I do assure you he goes on very sensibly, considering the various parties he has to deal with, each pulling different ways; but there is a feeling of insecurity, and I believe the Orleanists will come in at last if civil war don't come. I believe also in the *bonne foi* of Thiers, which some don't—that is, that he loves France better than anything else, and that if he thought the Orleans heir had a really good chance, he would not oppose him. But though the republicans are in much smaller numbers, they are much more energetic and quite fanatical, and he wants to avoid civil war at any price. I really believe Thiers is afraid of the republicans, that is, of the mischief they can and will do. I believe that I am perfectly impartial in this view.

Léon Say is Préfet of Paris, but it bores him and his wife. They have come to the Luxembourg, as the Hôtel de Ville is in ruins;

I wish they may stay. Mr. Mohl, seeing I am writing to you, says he much approves of your not giving all the names, as you cannot tell the mischief you might do; but if I were you I would keep a written key of them, in case of death or other contingencies.

Cold Overton, August 5.

I arrived here half-dead with fatigue; not so much with the journey as with a sort of battle at Peterborough, where the platform must have had at least eight hundred people, with three or four porters, and I had to run from my Great Northern to get into my Cross Midland, hauling hold of one porter, who, as he was stronger than I, managed to get away. I had three packages in my hand, two in the van, and three minutes allowed for changing. I never ran quicker in my best days; if it had been a matter of life and death I could not have done more. But the resuscitation has been paid for; I can scarcely walk upright, even after a week.

I found my poor sister better than I expected. Only one niece here. I am able to return to my writing, and am so glad; it is the first time for eleven months, and I begin to hope I have not grown stupid, and that the brain has escaped the general wreck. I am not the least *ennuyée;* on the contrary, I enjoy the garden more than I can tell when it is fine. My poor husband was half-dead when he got to Petersthal. He gives a most amusing account of all the Russian court had done there; they are just gone. Among other absurdities, they had always six carriages with four horses standing ready all day, in case they should have a whim to take a drive. They gave brooches, rings, diamond pins, etc., to almost every one they spoke to; new furnished the whole establishment; and the waiter, after telling all this, said, "It has made us all turn republicans." This is in the Pays de Bade. I should like to print the letter, it is so curious.

Julius Mohl to Lady William Russell.

Petersthal, Grand Duchy of Baden, August 6, 1871.

DEAR LADY WILLIAM,

I do not know if you care to hear from this out-of-the-way place in a high valley of the Black Forest, but I wish to report myself as living and reasonably well, notwithstanding a miserable,

rainy, cold, and uncomfortable season. This place and its surroundings are most beautiful, but we are mostly kept in by incessant rain, which is the greater pity, because one cannot swallow a reasonable quantity of these intensely cold mineral waters except in warm weather and by perpetual motion. We are not a gay population: a few hundred ladies of weak constitution, mostly miserably pale from want of blood, and a sprinkling of dyspeptic men, do not form a very lively parish. We get all up at six o'clock, begin to pour cold and saline water into our poor stomachs; wander about where the weather or shelter permits it; take our baths; breakfast with coffee; dine at one; walk for ever till supper at eight o'clock, and then go to bed, or the foolish ones to some concert, as there is everlasting music by artists or amateurs. I keep away from this noise.

The donkey W——, who translates "Bildung" by Sagesse, is not corresponding member of the Institut, I am happy to say; no such name is in the lists, and the fellow is a usurper, too, if he takes this title; however, I won't answer for any correspondent or member either in general; we are a very fallible generation, to begin with his Holiness. This reminds me of a conversation I had with the parish priest here, a fat, comfortable, Capuchin-like looking priest, who has a beautiful tenor voice, and sings, to the admiration of the ladies, all sort of lieder from Schubert, Mendelssohn, and other—ecclesiastical—composers. I talked to him about the noise in the Catholic Church in Germany. He said it was indifferent to him if the pope declared himself infallible or not, but it was certainly not a necessary step, as the Church had gone on well enough without it; at any rate, it gave him great trouble to steer clear of his masters, the chapter, and his paymaster, the Government, who were quarrelling about it; he only wished they would settle it anyhow between themselves, and let him alone. You see, there is hereabouts little chance of a schisma, and little enthusiasm for the Jesuits, but in other places the fight is very passionate, and if the Government had in some degree encouraged the schisma it would have taken great proportions; as it is, only the higher classes of laymen (as far as they are not entirely indifferent, which is the case with most of them) care for it. If there is any real schisma it will be about like the schisma of the Jansenists, more literary than popular, and then die out gradually. This is not what I wish, but what I expect. It was

a great opportunity of ridding the Catholic world of Jesuit government, subtilty, and falsification, but it has been missed.

There is much discontent among the troops of Baden, who have been amalgamated with the Prussian army. The officers have all lost by their new patents some years of seniority; they are not delighted at the prospect of being sent into garrison at Posen or such-like places, and afraid of being neglected at Berlin in the matter of advancement; and the civilians complain of the great increase of taxes which the new arrangement requires.

We have profited here by the enormous expense of the Empress of Russia, who had the establishment newly furnished for herself and her court of one hundred and twenty people. They have spent insane sums at a place where it seems impossible to spend much; but empresses seem to find no difficulty in this, and after having paid everybody and for everything exorbitantly, they must have felt a great deal of superfluous cash in their pockets, and began to distribute diamonds and snuff-boxes, rings and lockets, at a great rate. Of course they are very popular here, but not so in Russia, where people complain sorely of this waste of money in foreign countries.

The following letter shows how staunch M. Mohl was to his adopted country:—

Cold Overton, August 11, 1871.

DEAREST MINNIE,

I would no more have gone to Brighton, if I had been you and could have enjoyed myself in Cornwall Gardens, than I would have flown, unless the sea was necessary for the children. It is one of the most disagreeable places I know, and you had more trees, shade, and all country satisfactions in London, and more solitude too. It's a nasty, shallow place. My spouse is at Petersthal, and I hope getting better; I will be sure and let you know when he returns to Paris, because I shall go about the same time in September. I had rather get there a few days before you to get things in order, especially as September is the deadest month in the year, this being vacation month for the public librarian, etc. When you come we will go to the play every night; but I don't think the theatres are in a good state in September, because all the university people are away, and return in October. However, you must decide that *yourself;* I can

only keep you *au courant* of what is going on. I am better than I have been for fifteen months, for I was but middling in the spring last year before the war began, and that finished me. As Mr. Mohl is in a German watering-place, he has seen many Prussians. The Prussian government want to make Mr. Mohl the head of the new university they establish at Strasburg, because his position in Paris, they think, would make him of more consequence at Strasburg; but he answered nothing would induce him. He did not, I suppose, say what I know to be the truth, that nothing would induce him to be anything under the Prussian government. If you should see the Duc de Broglie mind you tell him this, as my spouse may as well have the credit in the eyes of the French of keeping aloof from the Prussians.

Ever yours,
MARY MOHL.

Julius Mohl to Lady William Russell.

Cold Overton, near Oakham, September 1, 1871.

DEAR LADY WILLIAM,

I have found my lady and mistress very ailing and very desponding. But I have seen her very much weaker and in a worse state formerly, so I hope she will get over this too; but it is always a long and painful malady.

We are in this pastoral country very much behindhand in news, and reduced to the *Standard;* while I know that at the Athenæum await me papers from all countries.

I see Jules Favre has made proposals to Prussia, but they are ridiculous"; and I see, from letters I have just received from Stuttgart, the ideas of peace conditions which float in the minds in Germany are exorbitant, so we may look for a continuation of these horrors until both parties are exhausted.

I spent a fortnight in the Rue du Bac in the beginning of October. Madame Mohl was kind enough to take in also my son, who was returning from a school in Switzerland. It was sad to see the ruin of the beautiful city, but our hosts were delightful. I never knew M. Mohl so amusing. In the gloaming before dinner he used to tell us stories of the strange

people he had met and the odd adventures that had befallen him. We went continually to the play, and a great many of our old friends came up from the environs to see us, for Paris was very empty. Society, indeed, never got over the effects of the war, and Madame Mohl's *salon* never regained all its former brilliancy.

CHAPTER XIII.

FROM THE WAR TO M. MOHL'S DEATH (1871–1876).

Death of Nicholas Tourguénieff—His noble character—Longing for a kitten—"Le Chat de Perse"—Illness of the Prince of Wales—State of Paris—Importance of sociability—German women—Duc d'Aumale's receptions—Government should return from Versailles—Thiers in advance of the nation—Smart handkerchiefs—Hideous fashions—Trouble to reconstruct her society—Projects must be hatched in secret—Exactions of America—Léon Say—Thiers—England and Louis Napoleon—New gown—Feeling against Germans—Influence of human beings on each other—Love the foundation of all good—Fortitude of the Says—Death of M. Cochin—"Violet, or the Danseuse"—Death of Lady C. Locker—Death of Hugo Mohl—Grief of Julius—Money to Viennese children—Beauty of sister—Père Hyacinthe—Helplessness of English people—Periodicals in the Rue du Bac—Horror of marriage without love—Insecurity of French investments—The *Droit* pushes against Thiers—Lytton Bulwer—Duchess Colonna—Flatness of society—Louis Napoleon did more mischief than the war—Wish to visit Berlin—Delight in conversation—Katchimoffski—Death of M. Doudan, of Madame Arconati, and Princess Belgiojoso—Treatment of M. Reynouard by Louis Napoleon—Determines to fight with life—Ampère's love-letters—The Duchesse de Berri—The *Branche aînée* will never be restored—Death of Madame Pauline de Witt—Grief and fortitude of Guizot—Madame C—— —Wonderful singing—Bishop Temple—English weddings—Death of Lady W. Russell—Illness of Lady Augusta Stanley—Anxiety of Madame Mohl—State of politics—Destruction of forests—Scarcity of hay—Failing health of Julius Mohl—Visits to Knowsley—Lord Odo Russell's singing—Judges and marshals—Curious state of politics—Illness of Julius Mohl—His wife's anxiety—His death.

MADAME MOHL wrote of herself, "My head had such a hard squeeze during the troubles that part of it, I believe, oozed out, for I am full of blunders ever since." It is certain that she never entirely recovered from the grief and anxiety which preyed upon her all the more that she did not think it right to complain or to inflict her miseries on her friends.

The brightest days of her life, however, were over. Many

of the old set were dead; M. Mohl's health was seriously impaired, and his position as a German was no longer quite what it had been in Paris. In London, on the other hand, she had become, by her long stay among us, better and more widely known, and her arrival towards the end of the season was the signal for all sorts of festivities. All who knew her wanted to see her, and all who did not wanted to make her acquaintance. She stayed at the deanery every year, and often with us. It is interesting to turn to the record of the friends we collected to meet her, and yet melancholy, for so many have passed away; for instance, her kind hosts—the dean and Lady Augusta, Mr. Greg, Mr. Brookfield (in whom she particularly delighted), Mr. Russell Gurney, Mr. Merivale, Sir Bartle Frere, Mr. Fergusson, Mr. J. R. Green, Sir Arthur Helps, Mr. Bagehot, etc. We often begged her to come with M. Mohl and live in England. "No, no, my dear," she would say; "it is only because I am a rarity that you make such a fuss about me." Indeed, though her heart was English, her habits were so essentially French, that she would not have been happy here. She would have missed the intimate relations which made for her the charm of society in Paris.

The autumn of 1871 was saddened by the death of Nicholas Tourguénieff, a distant relation of Ivan, the author. The two Tourguénieffs went in 1870, during their exile in London, to a lecture on Russia by Mr. Ralston. In the middle of it the lecturer said that the man who had done most and had made the greatest sacrifices for the emancipation of the serfs was present—pointing to Nicholas, who was obliged to stand up and receive the long and hearty cheering of the audience.

To Miss E. Martin.

November 13, 1871.

We have lost M. de Tourguénieff; he died last Friday in the night, without any suffering. He had been in bed some time, and his

wife was arranging her bed beside his, towards twelve o'clock, when he cried out, "Oh!" and, on finding him senseless, she thought he had fainted. She called Albert, but he was completely gone. Pierre drove instantly to the town very near, but the doctor who came confirmed it. He had lost his appetite a day or two before, but had argued the whole of the evening with a gentleman I know, on the new law on public instruction just promulgated by Jules Simon, with as much warmth and interest as he could have felt at thirty. He was eighty-two. The gentleman, who is a doctor, said to Albert, "He is astonishing, but I fear he has a little fever." He fell ill in England with tormenting himself about the war, and had an inward bleeding ever since; but he was better. Still Mr. Mohl was anxious. It is supposed something belonging to this caused his death; but it was an easy and a happy death. His whole life had been employed in trying to do good, and it came as natural to him as his breathing. He was the most humane man I ever knew. Adieu, my dear Eleanor; you will feel for Fanny.

To Lady Augusta Stanley.

Paris, Tuesday, November 14, 1871.

DEAREST DEAR,

I was much invigorated by your letter just now, for I was in a low state, Mr. Mohl being gone about an hour to the funeral service of that most excellent of men, M. de Tourguénieff (not Ivan), the old one, whom you knew also a little, but not enough to know all his fine character. He was eighty-two; had been suffering much from weakness and illness for the last ten months, mostly brought on by his taking so much to heart all the distresses of the past year. Before this war he enjoyed the most vigorous old age, had scarcely a grey hair, rode out on horseback every day, and was occupied at home in sorting papers, letters of his brother's, all the recollections about Russia, which would bring additional light on the great object of his life—the freeing of the serfs. His life was devoted to it from twenty to eighty-two. I could cry, I *do* cry, not from grief but in admiration, while I think and write to you of it. Encouraged in it by Alexander I., after Alexander's death, when he was twenty, he was condemned to death by the old Russian party, the supporters of Nicholas. This happened several years afterwards. On the pretence that he had conspired against Nicholas when he

ascended the throne, his property was taken from him and given to his brother, who was a good brother, although he took care to keep with the powers that were, and he brought all the money he got by selling the lands to his brother here by degrees, with the utmost difficulty and secrecy. When the Emperor Nicholas died and his son Alexander succeeded, he reversed the attainder, recognized him as a true and loyal subject, restored him to all his rights and privileges; this is about eight or ten years ago. He went to Russia for a few months, taking his son and daughter. Some time after his return here an aunt died, leaving him her property and many serfs. Off he went again at seventy-four or seventy-five, and remained a long time to give them their freedom, and try to make that gift useful. He was past seventy-five, so he sealed in his old age all the aspirations of his youth. I wish he had died in England, that my dear Arthur might have rendered a homage in the Abbey to a life and character so complete, so true, so modest. I could fill sheets with details, but these are the heads, and not a spot in the details can be found to sully the whole. His faults were only the lights and shades that accompany the virtues which formed the whole tissue of his life; they were in the country when you came here, or I should have proposed Arthur's calling on him. Of course I am solemnly grave, but I do not regret his death; he did not suffer, and it was better he should die in possession of all his faculties than dwindle down. I am so glad Mr. Mohl was so fond of him; he went often, and was a great comfort to him.

Adieu, dearest; I can't talk of anything else just now.

Yours and Arthur's ever,

MARY MOHL.

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Life was a dreary waste to Madame Mohl without a cat. There were none of the right sort to be had in Paris (they had almost all died, or been eaten during the siege), but there was a kitten of the Embley breed waiting her acceptance, if an escort could be found. At last M. Liebreich took it over, and was announced in the Rue du Bac as "Le Shah de Perse."

December 15, 1871.

DEAREST MINNIE,

I have been very bad, but for the last week am better; I fainted away one night three weeks ago, as dead as mutton. I was all alone, and knocked my cheek-bone against something, and it was black and blue for ten days; yet the fainting was so complete I did not know it. It was past twelve, and the light fell, and when I came to I was in complete darkness. However, better I am, and I rejoice that I can write. I believe I am quite cured, which I never believed last winter and spring, because the pain in my back never left me. If I had a kitten to kiss I should be still better. Florence has a beauty for me; if you can find any one that will bring me my kit in a basket, I will do everything in my power for them—get them tickets for the Institut, invite them to my parties, introduce them to people, and make myself generally useful; so pray set your fertile brain to work. I can do much more than when you were here. I was then a very poor cranky creature.

December 22, 1871.

Thank you, dearest Minnie, for putting me in the way of getting my kit. Oh, if you knew the feverish longing I have for it! Nothing but yours for Amy can give you an idea of it. Don't be angry; it's a fact, and can't be helped. I'm much better, and as a proof am full of absurdities, another fact that can't be helped. I have a dinner-party to-day, and instead of being lazy, dawdling, and putting off to the last moment all the little arrangements necessary, I have been at it all the morning without egging myself on—a sign I have not seen these eighteen months. I know I'm getting out of my cocoon into the butterfly state. I'm as full of vagaries as a long Invalide is apt to be.

December 29, 1871, Wednesday night, twelve o'clock.

I have only just time to say that Liebreich brought the lovely creature last night at seven o'clock, and it began to play as soon as it got out of the basket. I was in perfect raptures. He, poor soul, brought it straight from the railroad, and he had so much trouble, I felt remorse, and expressed it. He said there was nothing he would not do for me. I am better, and, I hope, getting well, but I have no strength. All England is in a state of jubilee, it seems, at

the prince's being spared, and he gets a preachment to be a good man in the newspapers. I like that much. I must wish you good night, and thank you for the tit, though poor Liebreich was victimized. However, he has wonderful energy; and what a man is in the great affairs of life, he is in the small ones.

Yours ever,
M. M.

To Lady Augusta Stanley.

January 6, 1872.

You are now, thank God, out of your worst anxieties. Besides the feeling for the poor mother and family, I was much troubled to think that, if the prince died, the country would be so preoccupied that it would not have time to look into its own misgovernment; at least, such it appears to me—absolutely dreadful. Am I wrong? I wish I may be. Do tell me what Arthur thinks. I was still very ill when I got your letter, and could not write. The cold in November half killed me, but I am now so much better that I have hopes of getting well, which I had not then. That good soul Liebreich brought me a kitten from Florence Nightingale—such a love!—and he was coming round all the way by Bath, where his daughter was; but when I thanked him, he said there was nothing that *I* could ask him to do that he would not do. He has been doing such a power of work in ten days' time, it seems like a miracle.

Do you know the American ambassador here, and are you *en mesure* to give me a letter of introduction to him? I need scarcely say "don't do it," if it cannot be done with that grace and ease that you put into all your efforts to oblige, because I know your tact and wisdom, which make you so delightful to deal with.

We are in a queer state here, it strikes me; but there is an opinion afloat that the Comte de Paris promised Henri V. that he would not reign till after him. I doubt it, though Duvergier de Hauranne told me he knew it for certain. I shall ascertain from Régnier if it is false. It is most mischievous, as it has alienated an immense majority from the Orleans, who might have accepted him as a constitutional king, but never will if he allies himself to the Ultras; their fundamental notions are perfectly antipathetic. When I said, "What could have induced him?" his answer was, "To get the Ultra party." I have repeatedly been told this, but never so posi-

tively. It would be the most impudent of lies. Meantime scarcely any one *will* believe in the permanency of the present state of things, and that very state of doubt will bring on the mischief it dreads. I am far more angry at the French now I see them at work than when I was worried to death in London with the newspaper nonsense.

We are pretty comfortable as far as mere living goes. Everything is much dearer; but our losses have been far less than I expected, and the wonder to me is, that after such a dreadful year, such a dreadful waste of life and means, such sums to be paid—first to the enemy, and next for the extravagancies of the imperial government—that things are as good as they are. Such a waste of the poor animals—the cattle so diminished in number that my London kitten won't lap milk, forsooth, because it is so different from what she had at Florence Nightingale's. She goes about mewing for better, which they call cream. But each one abuses everything that is done from their own party view, and the Orleanists more than any one—I mean their *party;* I don't accuse *them;* I believe they are more reasonable.

Adieu, dearest; love to Arthur and to those who inquire after me.

M. M.

If you see Lady Hobart, tell her that I like her friend Madame Rothan better and better.

To Miss E. Martin.

January 20, 1872.

Of course I shall make a great fuss with Dr. Smart, and invite him to dinner. I have a dinner-party pretty regularly once a fortnight, on Friday, of twelve or thirteen people; the intervening Friday people come in the evening without invitation, and very pleasant it is; besides which I have often a few intimates, M. Roulin, M. Decaisne, Josephine, every fortnight, Monday; the intervening Monday we dine there (*i.e.* at M. Roulin's), besides occasional small ones of the Burnoufs', etc. I have made a point, even when this winter I was at the worst, of cultivating society, which, being my especial talent, I will not bury, for in the present state it is far more useful than giving away money. The quantity of people in good circumstances who have kept away from various causes must, of course, deaden everything, though less than I should have expected, and every little does a little good, were it only to feed the poor

horses and hackney coachmen; it is far better to give them employment than help; besides, I agree with my dear old Johnson, civilization and society are greater moralizers than preaching—at least, in large towns; I can't judge of villages, though, from various observations which I have made in England, I am convinced if sociability between the various grades of society were more cultivated, it would be by far the best way to prevent the ever-increasing hatred between the democracy and aristocracy. When I was young your grandfather * was the friend of all his tenants, yet he did not spoil and pet the beggars as Tom did. He used to invite the farmers' wives to tea now and then. These were remains of old-fashioned manners. It never came into their heads to be wanting in respect and good feeling—and benevolent habits of thought are more cultivated by seeing one another than by separation. However, the manners now in England are so totally different from the old ones that I am not fit to live there; I found that out last winter.

To Madame von Schmidt.

(Translation.)

January 27, 1872.

MY DEAR CHILD,

I have this instant received your letter from Berlin, and as I have no recollection of the last I wrote to you, do not be surprised if I repeat the same things. My best news is that I am really better. I am so thin that I actually pity myself, but I am not out of spirits as I have been. Sometimes I have a ray of hope that I shall return to the state I was in two years ago; but I must not flatter myself that I shall escape the fate of all the world, *i.e.* grow old—and this fate is singularly distasteful to me. I am as gay as ever, often in as high spirits as ever, but for a long time I was afraid I had lost the power of working; I found so much difficulty in applying myself seriously, even in the most ordinary matters. . . .

What a blessing that L—— is married! Oh, what a blessing! With such a head as hers, one never knew what whim would seize hold of her. Oh, I never shall forget my surprise at the utter want of reason which possessed her, like a sort of mania, during the war. I never saw anything to be compared to it; there is nothing like it in France or England. May Heaven preserve me from German

* Mr. Frewen Turner.

women! Do you remember a girl from Dresden, a young artist *protégée* of Madame Schwabe's? I think she was even madder than L——. She almost killed herself, by starvation and other follies, to study painting. She had a great deal of talent; but, after seeing these two, I am not astonished at the horror German men have of women-artists. I share it.

I am trying to re-enter society. I give dinners, I pay visits, and I try to be as amiable as I can. I seldom say what I think, and I really believe that this is the great secret of the art of living; but it is enough to make one want to die, for the greatest of satisfactions is to exhale one's rage against folly.

I went to the Duc d'Aumale's grand *soirée*, the first to which ladies were invited; he sent for his sister Clementina on purpose to do the honours, and receive the ladies. I was presented to her. I shall have some trouble to make your uncle go again, but *I* shall certainly go at least once more. There was an enormous crowd, and I was glad to see all the best company eager to welcome the Orleans family, who have the best manners, the most distinguished air, that you can possibly imagine; they are all tall, handsome—in short, they look like princes. One cannot fancy how in this country, where they make so much of grace and distinction, they can have accepted Louis Napoleon instead of this family. One is reminded of Hamlet's speech to his mother, comparing his dead father to the brother she chose to succeed him, "to feed on garbage." It is a magnificent comparison. Certainly Louis Napoleon was garbage—the pigs'-wash that the ducks eat. But if I begin to quote Hamlet, I shall never finish. I just opened the book to find the passage, and went on reading, and saying to myself that I have never heard or seen Hamlet either read or acted to my satisfaction. Does your little Arthur amuse himself by reading? I have seen in reading families this taste develop in some individuals who would not have read otherwise. The effects of sympathy are wonderful. One thing, however, is certain, that people read only half as much as they did when I was young, in France as well as in England; and I think the execrable mania of forcing every one to perform bad music is in part the cause, and has spoilt the imagination of the whole of the present generation. The best of it is that no one listens to it.

Write to me, dear child; tell me everything that concerns you. Railroads are beginning to pay again. After the extreme republicans,

the Carlists do the most harm. If Henri V. were dead we should have a chance, for the provinces are all in favour of a king. Adieu.

M. M.

P.S.—Try not to fatigue yourself too much, my dear child; it will make you grow prematurely old. The use of money is to spare one's strength.

... February 1, 1872.

DEAR MINNIE,

I'm resolved this month shall not grow old before I write. I am certainly better, but have had much to do, because I want to profit of it to put my house in order before I die, to sort and burn my letters, make my will, etc. I have been ill long enough to think about what a grievous state all these things are in; but when I get better, instead of profiting of it to do all this, I try to amuse myself, which I contemn, and think very frivolous. I have seen the Duc de Broglie but once; he is always at Versailles till late at night. I have given a few dinners, and done my duty towards sociability. I had Ivan Tourguénieff to dinner on Friday; he was quite charming. The Guizots are here, and I go there in the evening, and to Madame Say's. I have been to one of the grand receptions of the Duc d'Aumale; am invited for all, and shall go again. I have been twice to the play, once with Lady Augusta. These are my dissipations. Paris looks pretty much itself in the day, but at night one goes along scarcely meeting a carriage. The folly and malice of the deputies remaining at Versailles does no end of harm, shaking the general faith in the Government, retarding commerce, and cramping all the wheels of government. It is now seen how evidently the majority in the country is behindhand in civilization to the minority who are endeavouring to bring it round. I don't mean to say that Thiers is a miracle of wisdom, and his financial knowledge about taxes is as backward as anybody's, but in many respects the Government is before the nation, and one instance is its wish to come back to the capital, as all business now is cramped. Still the wonder is that the country, after its brain fever, should go on living and paying its way. Adieu.

P.S.—I have not written since I thanked you for contriving the cat's journey; it's a great delight to me, and the prettiest, cleverest tit I ever saw.

To Madame von Schmidt.

(*Translation.*)

February 28, 1872.

MY DEAR CHILD,

This very evening I have received the superb handkerchief that you embroidered for me. I have had none to be compared with it. I have six very pretty ones that your mother sent me, but of more moderate pretensions. I assure you that yours will last me for the rest of my life; however, as I have never bought any, except to blow my nose in all simplicity, I owe all this luxury to the Mohl family, and when I die you will find them all in good condition. I assure you that I am delighted with it, and if you thought tenderly of me while you were working at it, I shall think of you in the same way when I put it in my pocket. I cannot imagine any smaller, but, as you know, I am not much *au courant* with the fashion; but it seems that the time when attention was paid to magnificent handkerchiefs passed away twenty years ago—at least, I no longer see them in ladies' hands flourishing about. Trimmings and falballas have quite absorbed handkerchiefs; they are no longer thought about. I went yesterday to see "Rabagas," and I was quite astounded by the dresses of the actresses; in the first place it is hideous, and no sleeves are worn—not any at all; only a scrap of lace. I must say that at the Duc d'Aumale's, who gives very fine parties of four hundred people, the dresses are less exaggerated. There were some ladies sensibly dressed; some had beautiful lace. Invitations were for once a week during January and February. These *soirées* are over, but it is said that they will begin again after Easter; and I shall be very glad, for it is a rallying-point worth preserving. There is no other place where good society can meet. He receives, naturally, the Orleanists and the moderate Legitimists, the members of the Institut if they know how to dine in company, the deputies, and all that visited the duke in England. It is there that your handkerchief will flourish about. I am giving more dinners than I have given for the last six or seven years, partly on principle, and partly because I like it. First, the Germans are not popular, and I never tried so hard to be amiable in order to reconstruct my society; secondly, it is actually my widow's mite which I contribute towards the cause of civilization. When I began in November there were no dinners or

soirées; everybody sulked at home. My first dinner was for the Stanleys, who were staying with us. It succeeded, and I have gone on, and been all the better for so doing; it required a certain effort to begin. I had two young servants to educate. Julie came, and comes whenever there is company, *i.e.* twice, or even three times, a month. I don't count the little dinners for the Burnoufs and Roulins.

You may be sure that I have had no encouragement from your uncle—indeed, I forbear consulting him lest I should lose my *verve*; but when I have arranged everything I ask his advice. Criticism is good, but if there were nothing else nothing would ever be done—"it clips the wings of genius and invention;" and also, if you notice, when one is hatching some project, the least objection is enough to crush it; it must be kept quiet. My health has much improved during the last three weeks, since I have resumed my tepid baths; I don't yet dare to take them cold. I am fearfully thin. I hope to be better next month, for you would be grieved to see my face. I own, to my shame, that my looks distress me beyond measure. It is very foolish, for old age must come.

I am grieved and annoyed by the exactions of America. I hope that England will not yield; but she has a horror of war. Have I ever spoken to you about Lady Salisbury, now Lady Derby? Her husband is considered the most distinguished of the future Tory ministers. They spent five days here, she asked to meet Léon Say and Renan. I had them here with the three wives. Lord Derby is extremely shy (the prevailing English malady; it is the fault of their education), however it all went off pretty well. Léon Say told a great many interesting things. Say has become a great person—Prefect of Paris; he acquits himself very well, he wished to retire, but Thiers yielded some point (I don't know what) to him in order to keep him. Thiers is an old bigot, who thinks that the only good traditions are derived from Bonaparte's government between 1802 and 1808, the fife and drum of 1805 are always sounding in his ears, just as the taste of some dainty remains in the mouth of a schoolboy.

Good night at last, dear child; it is nearly two o'clock. Another sign of improvement—I can sit up and employ myself at night without fatigue; if I went to bed earlier I should not sleep.

Tuesday, March 4, 1872.

DEAREST MINNIE,

I am ashamed of myself for not answering about Madame Cornu. I wrote in a hurry, and did not take one paragraph after another as I ought. I have thought about it since, and intended to write; but you know what hell is paved with. I should think you might publish all Madame Cornu * said with the greatest propriety, and it would only be too good for the fellow; but the English make me sick. If Old Nick was civil to them for his own ends, they would call him an angel. Now, I know nothing sillier than that, as it puts all such vain fools at the mercy of any sharper. Louis Napoleon inspired his whole court with the most contemptuous abuse of England after the Crimean War; I absolutely shut my door upon the two or three people I happened to have known for years who were either at that court or in the bureaux. I could repeat what they said if I had time. Therefore, if the account of Madame Cornu is rather lowering, I shall be very glad; but I can scarcely ask her, poor thing. She is in a dreadful state with a heart-complaint, and sees no one, and lives in the country—I don't even know where—and I have no way of finding her out; the war and the Commune have scattered every one so.

After the colonels' attack on England in 1859, which was inspired by Louis Napoleon entirely because he thought it was our business to look after Orsini, the Volunteer movement inspired by that panic made him alter his tone, and then he was very civil, because he wisely thought—first, that the English are very powerful; and secondly, very gullible. And he was quite right.

I am in all the anguish of having a new gown made to go to the Duc d'Aumale's. It's an awful thing to cut up a handsome satin to make a gown that mayn't fit; and no dressmaker fits me now my last one is dead, and I'm awfully particular. Yours in haste. I haven't said half my say about Louis Napoleon, but I've no time because of my gown.

M. M.

* Madame Cornu's conversations, published in Senior's journals.

To Lady Augusta Stanley.

March 19, 1872.

DEAREST DEAR,

Good Lord, how glad I was to see your spider! I at last fancied I had done something wrong, and that you were cooled to me, for as I have a terrible bad memory, when I get low-spirited —which I often do—I see everything in black, and as I know in general what nonsense I talk sometimes, how I give way to the feeling of the moment, which in reality is temper, I am often suspecting that the details of my behaviour may shadow over my good feelings, which I assure you I have. Thus, if I am long without hearing from my favourites, I begin recollecting all my misdemeanours. I have three kings, or rather queens, in England who occupy an enormous domain—you, Florence, and Lady William, who has much maltreated me, but I cling to her nevertheless, and I have no doubt I have misbehaved by knocking against her feelings, for, of course, my queens are not perfect; I should be very sorry if they were so. When I'm low I don't blame them, but myself; and I raked up in my memory all I had said during my *séjour* in England to explain your silence. When I was in a better mood I said, "Nonsense; she has been overdone with work." *Voilà* a picture of my very disorderly *intérieure!*

We shall have the house smart with a new broom which I shall buy for the purpose. There is not the slightest reason why you should not come.

I am quite a new person from what I was when I saw you here. In November and December I was very bad. I made a great effort to force myself into life. I saw the tendency in Mr. Mohl to fall into low spirits because of the foolish, the absurd, the unjust feelings against the Germans. I determined at least to fight against it as far as I could, and did all in my power to keep up society and goodwill; never refused to go out, however great the effort. It has answered, as far as *we* are concerned. Mr. Mohl don't know how much his spirits depend upon the *bienveillance* of others. No one knows it, and he would be hurt if he did. We all depend dreadfully on each other. We live in a world of looking-glasses, and it is our mind, not our face, that is given back to us by the reflection. If we see a dingy look at us, we grow dingy. A *bienveillant* look is better than

a cordial. We need not wonder that Christianity has made charity the foundation of all good. Our very being seems composed of how we stand in the minds of our fellow-creatures. Some call it weakness, and so it is; but I question whether it is not a law of our nature.

Adieu, dearest. Tell me when I may expect you. This is the 19th, therefore April 1 will be twelve days hence. My garden will be all green; it is already beautiful for you to look out upon.

I can't think of Madame Cochin * without feeling as if I was cut with a knife; they were so fond of each other. Oh dear!

Yours ever,

MARY MOHL.

To Miss E. Martin.

March 26, 1872.

Léon Say is Prefect of Paris, and does more good than any one in the Government and nation. There is but one opinion as to that, and I am lucky and thankful to be the friend of such good people, who have fought valiantly to conquer their affliction by doing their duty, for they lost their only son in the beginning of 1870, and were overwhelmed (he was a very promising boy); but when the national calamities came on, they both did their duty, he being the man who knew most about Paris, and who for the last ten years had written in the papers to show up the absurdities of Haussmann. . . .

Madame Chevreux has sent me a beautiful little book of letters written between 1796 and 1802, of M. Ampère's father and mother. His mother died when he was three or four years old. The father in 1802 had discovered the principle of the electric telegraph, and luckily for his fame made it public, which made them elect him to the Institut, which principle, followed up in practice, by degrees brought at last the electric telegraph; but the great advantage of the Institut is, that by making public the first steps of a discovery, it is secured to the first inventor, and also the invention, having a learned body to protect it, does not sink into oblivion, as many have done from the obscurity of a single individual and his want of power. Of course it required many helps to put it by degrees into practice. The reputation of old Ampère as a great natural philosopher has given great interest to these letters; but they are beautiful, as showing the interior of a good family in middle

* See next letter.

life just after the Revolution—their poverty, their modesty, their thrifty ways, and their honesty. I'll send you the book. . . .

Another terrible loss has occurred among the honest political set here—M. Cochin. I don't know if you ever heard me speak of M. and Madame Cochin—a delightful couple, who did much good. He was Prefect of Versailles under the new Government. He never would be anything under the last, and *could* not be a deputy because Louis Napoleon prevented the election of all the oppositionists he could. M. Cochin overworked himself, got a typhus fever, and died five days ago—such a loss to the public!

Léon Say looks so worn that I am quite uneasy about him. There are so few men who really think of the public good that they are worn out; they have so much to do. It is very cold just now, after a very perfect February; and the first week in March, Mr. Mohl and I went off to the Garden of Plants. Everything was budding beautifully, but we have had frosts for the last ten days or more, which have nipped many. However, the gardens from my window are most cheering.

April 30, 1872.

DEAR MINNIE,

I can't let a batch of letters go without sending a few lines to you by Lady Eastlake, who, having stayed ten days, goes to-morrow morning. I saw D—— last Friday. I should say, though I don't pretend to be sure, she has had some great love disappointment. By-the-by, I have just been reading "Violet the Danseuse" for the third time; it's a wonderful book, and the more so that one don't know who wrote it.* I think it's founded on a true story. Violet is beautiful, D'Arcy is as clever; all the characters are first-rate. Pity there are so many disquisitions on sentiment; the story don't require it. I was told it was Lord Brougham's, then Lady Malet's. I believe neither. Have you ever heard who wrote it?

I am going to a beautiful concert to-night at Madame Say's. Their house is much to my taste, having a great variety. I saw Thiers there the other day at a great party. He did not see me, and I could not take the trouble to go to him. He was very pale.

* It is known now to have been written by Lady Malet.

Paris, May 8, 1872.

To Lady Augusta Stanley.

DEAREST FRIEND,

How kind of you to think of me and my arrangements in spite of the great affliction that has come over you,* which I most especially understand when I think of my own dear sister, and the horror that comes over me at the thought that such might be my fate! I had made up my mind before this great trial of yours not to go to London till the very latter end of June, and to remain there but a short time. This decision was taken from an effort of prudence. I really enjoy London as much as possible, and your company and my dear dean's is a perfect blessing in my life; but as I am much better, I must try and keep so. The backwardness of the spring has come to fortify my resolution. I am always worse when it is cold and rainy; I come to life again like the insects when it is warm. Now Paris, though no great things as to climate, is a little better than London; therefore, if I wish to be as well as I can, I must keep to my resolution. Your present quiet life, in giving me more of both your companies, would be an additional inducement; but if I get ill again I am a plague to all my family and friends, and especially to my poor spouse, whose liver has suffered much from trying to suppress his grief, and bearing up that he might go on with his usual occupations and duties. We are both better, and I don't like to leave him alone a whole month, to ponder over his loss† when he is at home. The gift of my habitual animal spirits, which was the torment of the lives of my mother and grandmother, leading me into perpetual mischief, though worn down, has enough left now to be of value to him, as when he comes home he has some one to cheer him and to make him laugh, instead of going alone into his den like a poor sick lion; and this puts me in mind of Mr. Locker and the poor bereaved child, the object of such continual thought and care. Will you tell Mr. Locker I think of them both with great sympathy and sorrow? I will give your message to Madame d'Abbadie; she is a delightful creature, and worthy of your kind recollection. Pray, dear friend, believe that this sacrifice to prudence is very considerable. But I hope to see you a few days in July, if it is not inconvenient; if it is

* Lady Charlotte Locker died on April 26, 1872.

† The death of Hugo Mohl.

tell me so frankly, and I will go to some other friend. Love to dear Deany.

I am, yours most devotedly,
MARY MOHL.

(*Translation.*)

May 25, 1872.

MY DEAR IDA,

Your last letter is dated the 8th and 10th, so I must have received it about the 14th. I answered by return of post, because I was touched by the fate of the poor little children at Vienna that you and some other ladies are looking after. I put a hundred-franc note into my letter for you to spend on those poor little wretches; I have not heard whether you received it. I am uneasy, as some years ago enormous frauds took place in the post-office at Vienna. I saved the hundred francs out of my dress money; I have been very economical in that respect, and therefore gave myself the pleasure of sending it to you. . . .

During the last month your uncle has not been at all well; the death of his brother affected him deeply, more even than the deaths of his father or even of his mother, to whom he was so passionately attached. I attribute this excessive grief to his mind having lost something of its elasticity; it distresses me extremely to observe this change in him. I do all I can to make his life smooth and pleasant. Perhaps my goodwill has less effect than the charms of youth, which are mine no longer; perhaps I have lost the talisman which made every word I said, and even my follies, graceful in his eyes, and consoled him for everything else. I am more sorry for him than for myself, but there is nothing to be done. There is a certain spring in the mind which I have preserved, but which is seriously impaired in him, and the result is that nothing hardly gives him any pleasure, while the same things amuse and please me as much as ever.

I went the other day to the Français, and I cannot tell you what pleasure it gave me. I thank God for it, which would astonish many a devout mind.

Adieu, dear child; I count the days till I hear from you.

Cold Overton, August 8, 1872.

I stayed seventeen days in London, at the Deanery; I went out less than usual, and I think that I enjoyed the society of the dean and his wife more than I ever have done. She has lost her sister, Charlotte Lòcker, and she cannot get over it; it was nearly three months ago. She is just beginning to see a few people. This quiet was good for me; nevertheless, I tired myself very much in London. Since I have been here I have improved. . . .

My sister is better than I could have hoped; she keeps her lovely countenance. It is wonderful. It is not that she looks young, but she is wonderfully beautiful.

She wrote the following funny little letter, partly in French, partly in English, to M. Mohl:

CHER PUPS,

Je viens de voir un chien!!! Ah quel chien! quels yeux! c'est le premier chien de Skye que je voudrais avoir; mais une expression merveilleuse! Il était ici, les maîtres dans la bibliothèque, lui couché à la porte. Ses yeux disaient qu'il n'était pas chez lui, qu'il était un peu inquiet. Nous l'avons ramassé et *fondled*, aucune résistance, mais la tête en méfiance, la queue plongée dans un profond silence. Ni voix, ni témoignage. He was on my lap, we were admiring his face, cela ne le touchait pas. Les maîtres descendent, on le met à la porte—il les rejoint, il vole mais n'aboie pas, il n'était pas chez lui. Quelle céleste bête!!

Madame Mohl had a great sympathy with the Père Hyacinthe, who was put to great pecuniary inconvenience by his exclusion from the Church of Rome.

Paris, September 20, 1872.

DEAREST MINNIE,

I expect the Stanleys on the 25th. I want much to talk about Père Hyacinthe with them, for whom I have great sympathy. Mr. Mohl gave it well, in a railroad, to a Catholic lady who was abusing him well for his marriage, and told her it was *her* fault. "My fault?" "Yes; after making such an idol of him four or five years ago for his preaching, all you Catholics turned him out of the Church because he would not recognize a pretension which the

pope set up; the pope, therefore, excommunicated him, so you Catholics would not have him amongst you. It was not *he* who left *you*."

There are few people in Paris. I saw Lady Stanley of Alderley yesterday. She is a most amusing, lively person, very clever and very droll.

October 31, 1872.

I received yours of the 29th, and ought to have answered immediately, but the fact is I had not even time to read it, the Stanleys being with me; and what with making his toast—which no French maid could make—peeling his eggs, writing notes to invite people or to uninvite them, going to places with them, having people to dine and to breakfast with them, I entirely gave up all my own interests and occupations, and having but a very small income of strength, I should be bankrupt in five days if I did not give up all my own means to them. I don't grudge it, because I am fond of them, and I have likewise spent every summer for these nine years or so, a most agreeable time, with them. It is my inadequate capacities that are the cause, and the difference of habits. English people are so accustomed to have everything done for them, that they can't even comprehend how many wants they have beyond other people. These are, for English people, the most independent I know—Augusta having been brought up here, which makes a great difference; still my little strength is much tried. All this, I hope, will excuse my not answering yours immediately.

I understood from Sir James Colvile Mrs. Brookfield was here. I have not seen her. Lady Colvile is *most* agreeable.

Yours, in haste and turmoil,

M. M.

To Lady Augusta Stanley.

November, 1872.

DEAREST DEAR,

To think of Arthur purloining *La Revue* and my hunting for it, and Mr. Mohl having to make excuses, because it is the Institut's copy and has the stamp; and it ought always to remain on their table for the twaddling members, and I am ill looked upon because Mr. Mohl, in defiance of all rule and regulations, brings me all the reviews, French and English, as soon as he can pocket them

slyly. My name is up, and when any of them can't find one or another, he says, "Oh, it's in the Rue du Bac;" so, my dear, find some one to bring it sooner or later, for if the stamp is seen in England I shall get the credit of sending it there. If the umbrella is found (and I am afraid C—— will think it right to turn it to account, and not let so useful an implement eat the bread of idleness, therefore I say *if*), keep it for me. Mr. Mohl has bought me another, but I shall not be sorry to find it when I go to England.

I was in hopes you would have told me who was at Woburn, and what was said, all as circumstantially as in Evelina's Letters to her Guardian; but I dare say you never read that good book of the last century. Ask Arthur; I dare say *he* has. I got a longer one from Lady Derby, but she did not relate the conversations. Alas! those halcyon days are gone since the penny post.

Sarcey * told Mr. Mohl he had spent the most delightful evening with us that he had had for years—was not that nice? And I feel so much in love with him, that I shall do basenesses to get him again.

I am in great trouble about the Loysons.†

November, 1872.

DEAR MINNIE,

. . . Our politics are very unsatisfactory, and we are thinking of placing our next savings in England. Do you know of any good investment for small sums? The Ultras are cocking up their heads mast-high after forty-three years. They push violently against Thiers, and though in the beginning he had no tendency to make friends with any republicans, save very moderate ones, the behaviour of the *Côté Droit* shoves him violently towards them more than he ever intended, and though he is no hero, still he is worth much more than they are.

I gave a dinner-party last Friday, when I had among others Lytton Bulwer, the son of *the* Bulwer. I knew him fourteen years ago. He has been long in Austria, and has a wife. His face has grown like his father's. I like him very well indeed, and his wife too. He comes here as first secretary to the embassy, and will be an acquisition to my *habitués*, as he is very clever, and likes my sort of house. The Duchess Colonna is going to London for a short time; she is very charming, very clever, very entertaining. She goes

* The well-known critic. † The Père Hyacinthe.

to study Reynolds, Gainsborough, etc. I shall give her a letter to you; pray be useful to her. I have not room to tell you any more about her, but as I am very fond of her you may take her upon trust.

To Madame von Schmidt.

(Translation.)

December 27, 1872.

This winter requires more *toupet*—in English "animal spirits"—than any other I have spent in Paris; there is such a flatness, such a total want of sociability, compared with anything I have seen here, that it needs an iron will, and an elasticity which I no longer possess, to save oneself from abandoning every endeavour to restore a little animation. Last winter this was not the case—we encouraged each other; but now I do not see much chance of improvement. I have my ups and downs, and just now I have some worries which perhaps will pass over. One thing above all annoys me. The imperial *régime* demoralized France, and all the harm done by the war may in part be traced to its effects. Yet many people think now that the war has done all the evil, forgetting the great changes which have taken place during the last twenty years. We were in a false position, and the great endeavour of the wretched Government was to keep up this appearance of prosperity for which the nation had acquired a taste.

In my letter to Anna I hinted at a wish I have to go to Berlin, to see closer the men who have effected such great changes in Europe. I will try to persuade Mr. Mohl to go with me. The time is the difficulty. In the winter he is only free in October, November, and part of December; but perhaps there is no one in Berlin at that time. Tell me this. I believe no one is there in July, August, or September; and as for the natural beauties, there are none fit to look at. I own I should like to meet Bismarck and Moltke. Not a word of this in your letters, unless on a separate slip; the uncle must be brought round to it a little at a time. I know how to administer this sort of medicine. Adieu, dear child; may God give you health and courage.

She paid a very short visit to London this year, during which she enlivened us all very much, and then went to her sister in Leicestershire.

To Lady Augusta Stanley.

Cold Overton, July, 1873.

It seems to me, dearest dear, that it is a month since I was at the Deanery, and your kind letter does not shorten the time. I was as vexed as a thirsty horse forced to pass by the fountain he hoped to drink out of. But don't believe it was the gormandizing image of a teapot that incensed me. *No;* it was the merry converse—the account of the most historical of châteaux, the dean and his antiquarian love, which I sympathize with so entirely. Don't believe either that it was my cautious spirit hurried me away at twenty minutes after four, to arrive ten minutes before five, in order to set off at half-past five, full forty minutes too soon. No; it was the too prudent and unsympathizing Shirley who packed me off, giving unto himself the satisfactory self-approbation that I had better be too soon than too late, and what signified half an hour's idle talk? I am convinced he thought that he had acted nobly by me, in not attaching the slightest importance to such frivolities; but I ought to be comforted by your delightful letter, for of course I'm too glad to believe you would have liked me to have had the idle talk (the only thing in life worth having, by-the-by), which neither power nor money can give—it *will* grow of itself. I found my poor sister much broken; she was very glad to see me, which was a comfort, but it has not lasted. She is much older than last year, and it makes me mournful to think how little I can contribute to her satisfaction. A nephew of mine, about twenty (old enough to know better, by-the-by), was as much rejoiced at the Harrow victory as you were vexed with the loss. One good thing is it don't last long on either side, and both think they will win next year.

Madame Mohl took a great interest in a very distinguished Russian professor, who died early.

(*Translation.*)

Cold Overton, September 9, 1873.

MY DEAR IDA,

I do not remember if I have answered your letter, dated August 24. It gave me great pleasure. . . . I write to you now especially to ask you to forward the enclosed to poor Katchimoffski, if he is still alive. Your uncle has sent me a letter, written by him to

me in July, and which was mis-sent to Mr. Mohl; it is possible that you may know where to find him. Alas! perhaps he is dead, and if not, has he enough to live on?—for he can work no longer. I am in despair at receiving so late a letter which was written so long ago. Tell him so if he still lives.

Your uncle reached Paris a few days ago. I hope to be there on the 20th, for he cannot be very gay. Our dear M. Doudan that I was so fond of is dead; we used to spend the evening there every five or six days; it was a great pleasure. Alas! I am losing all my friends. My poor Milady * is still alive, but so suffering and complaining that it is always a toss-up how one finds her. Madame Arconati died sixteen or seventeen months ago, and the Princess Belgiojoso soon after, and I was a wretch who refused to go to see them in my last journey, although they begged me to do so. I shall never forgive myself. It is true that I was not well, but I could have done it. Alas! I was out of temper with them both, or I should have gone. This is why I suffer now from remorse. The weather is breaking up; it is cold in the morning, and I shall be glad to get back to Paris, but it breaks my heart to leave. My sister is better in body than I have seen her since her fall, but worse in mind. For the first two years she lost nothing, and took an interest in everything. Alas! this is no longer the case. She is still beautiful. I never before saw a very old person who was agreeable, *very* agreeable, to look at —although she does not look at all young for her age. Even the loss of her teeth does not disfigure her. It is an incomparable gift, and worth every other.

Adieu, my dear child; write here till the 19th, then to Paris, whence I shall write to you, whether you write to me or not. Kiss the chicks for me, and give my kindest regards to F——.

M. M.

Stors, Madame Chevreux's, October 2, 1873.

DEAR MINNIE,

We came here yesterday. I don't know if I explained to you (I believe not) that when you gave me your "Correspondence and Conversations" of Tocqueville last July (was it not?), I was too poorly, I could read nothing that required attention, and did not take them to Cold Overton; in fact, I was so out of heart about myself

* Lady William Russell.

that I cared for nothing. I got better when at C. O., and wrote to Lady Augusta to send the book to South Street when I was in London. I packed it up and brought it here, and am now reading it with the greatest pleasure. My faculties seem to have been washed up, ironed out, and much fresher than they have been during all my illness. I brought it here not only to read it myself, but to read some passages to M. Reynouard, who is Madame Chevreux's brother-in-law; he can read English, but not speak it or understand it when spoken. They bemoan the letters not being in French; however, the letters detached from the journal would not be half the value; still I should like an article on the book, with a few of them, in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*. What do you say to the idea? Mr. Mohl is most particularly pleased with the book, which he began in Paris, and has much enjoyed, and he desired me to tell you so; indeed, I quite regret having left it in London this summer; however, I am not at all sure I should have enjoyed it then as I do now. This is a very pretty place, where I come every autumn; they go away earlier than usual, October 10. I quite forget if you ever knew them; they were great friends of Ampère's, who lived the last ten years of his life with them, and he made them acquainted with me the last year of his life. They are very rich, and have a most agreeable country house here; he (M. Chevreux) is Léon Say's uncle. M. Reynouard, his brother-in-law, a man of about seventy, was councillor at the Cour de Cassation, when Louis Napoleon made the *coup d'état* in the end of '51, and he immediately put him in accusation for high treason. This spirited conduct might have cost him his life, but L. N. thought it as well to be content with putting him into prison, and letting him out again quietly. As he got the uppermost he could not prosecute him, nor have him turned out of the Cours; but he prevented his son, then about eighteen or twenty, from getting on as a lawyer, which was the young man's passion, and as he knew that he could never get on, he gave up the bar and got employment on the railroad. He is now a man of thirty-eight or forty, and never got over the blight, as he quite adored the profession of a lawyer; he has a melancholy look. I am particularly fond of the father; he is one of the most genuine persons I ever knew, and his courage in those trying days has placed him very high in public opinion, but he has always been considered very highly as a lawyer apart from that.

To Madame von Schmidt.

(*Translation.*)

Paris, October 7, 1873.

MM. Roulin and Decaisne dined here to-day. We were delighted to meet again. M. Roulin was very gay, but, alas! his mind is not what it was. He does not tell a story with the spirit he formerly had. Fortunately, he does not seem to be aware of it. It is colder than usual in October, and I am very glad to find myself again in my warm room. Your uncle is certainly much better than he has been since the siege and the war. We expect the dean and Lady Augusta this month. I have returned to Paris fully determined not to let myself fall into discouragement or laziness, but to fight with life, and to force it with kicks and thrusts to give me all the enjoyment it possibly can. This resolution will prove to you that my health has improved. . . .

Madame Chevreux continues to talk of you with great regard. As for me, the more I see them the better I like being with them. She read me some love-letters from Ampère to Madame Récamier, between 1820 and 1825; they are quite charming, and I am delighted that she is going to publish them. She is surrounded by people who discourage her, because it is not usual that a man of twenty should be so much in love with a woman of forty, and they call her a coquette. Certainly she was a coquette, but a charming one; and if every one was perfect there would be no more books, and if there were no more books, the best thing would be to be buried as fast as possible. Adieu, dear child. Write as soon as you can, and kiss poor little Nandor for me.

M. MOHL.

Paris, October 24, 1873.

DEAR MISS WYSE,

I was very glad to have a letter from you, whatever might be the occasion that procured me that pleasure. The Duchesse de Berri, married to Comte Lucchesi Palli, died at Venice on April 17, 1870. She was in debt and a bad manager, and, what I had forgotten (which Mr. Mohl has just recalled to my memory), the Comte de Chambord bought of her the said palace during her lifetime, paying her the money to enable her to pay some of her debts, which

did *him* credit, considering the grievous end she made to her political and heroic pretensions, even supposing the baby was legitimate, which I do not suppose at all. As I was very intimate with Madame de Chateaubriand, I was well informed. I do not remember the red château you mention, but I remember well the Riesenberg, which was not far from Schloss Hainfeldt. M. de Hammer took us there, and gave me a history he had written of it, and its seven fortifications and seven moats. I remember well, too, your beautiful mamma, and that Mr. Mohl came up to me and said, "Come down quickly to see the handsomest lady I ever saw." It was a time of great enjoyment to me, and everything is delightful that recalls it.

Our politics here are by no means so near a solution as you seem to think, and I don't believe the elder Branch's restoration will be more successful than were the attempts of the Stuarts in England. It amuses Lady William to fancy them back here. She spent her early days with many interesting emigrants, who have left none like them. I spent mine here, and part of them under Charles X., and saw the Revolution his folly brought on, which he might so entirely have avoided. Our points of observation are different; we should have been of the same opinion if they had been the same.

Adieu, dear Miss Wyse. Be assured that you will always receive a prompt answer when you favour me with a letter.

Yours ever,

M. MOHL.

To Lady Augusta Stanley.

Paris, March, 1874.

DEAREST,

I have just finished reading, or rather boggling, over your letter, and so rejoiced was I that I wrote yesterday such a candid and beautiful picture of my own virtues and merits that there is nothing more to be said, except that as I should have had much delight in your descriptions, hot and hot like a beef-steak at *Dolly's* (ancient days), so I promised myself never more to be good, virtuous, or self-denying—*c'est un métier de dupe.* We have been worse than dull this last month, instead of these assumptions of yours. These deaths cast such a gloom over me that I never invited a soul all March, and scarcely went out. The poor Lyttons, whom I saw often and intimately, lost their only boy, two years old—one or two days'

illness. They were so cut up they ran away to England, to hide themselves like wounded hares. I did so pity them. Then M. Guizot lost his daughter. I saw him six days after that event. He was calm and collected. Alluding to his age, he said a death was but a short separation; that he felt more for the husband than he could express; that their union had been a happiness for twenty-two years, and that few who died could have had such a destiny. His power of work goes on, and that is his *salut*. He wishes ardently to finish his "History of France." It is very touching to see the old man of eighty-six or eighty-seven working hard. When I saw him he was at his desk as busy as possible.

Forgive this horrid scribble; I have not time to copy it.

Yours ever,

MARY MOHL.

Paris, June 6, 1874.

DEAREST MINNIE,

I expect to go to London the 12th or 13th. It is dreadfully hot here; I never saw such a hot June. Lady Augusta tells me she has accepted the dinner you are so kind as to have for us on the 18th, so I shall be in plenty of time. I dread the journey; it must be like an operation—one bears it somehow or other.

I went to a musical party last night and heard Madame C—— sing. Twelve or fifteen years ago she was very handsome, with a splendid voice; it is so still, but her arms were bare to the shoulder-straps, and looked like smallish thighs. I was quite ashamed. Her voice stronger than ever; just like a man's in the low notes, extraordinarily fine in the high ones. There was something monstrous about her. I used to spend all my extra money upon her. Her husband, a rich man, took her off the stage, and she leads him the life of a dog.

She sang by herself the duet in the "Trovatore," low and high. The gipsy part filled me with the horror one would have had at the reality before the poor creature was to be burnt alive. It was very fine, and I must say I never fully understood Verdi's talent before; it has something of the Dante in it.

She paid this year her last visit to the deanery during the life of its beloved and distinguished mistress. M. Mohl had

also passed away before she again came to visit her dear old friend, Arthur Stanley, as well as the keen power of enjoyment which appears in the following note:—

Deanery, Sunday, July, 1874.

DEAREST MINNIE,

. . . I began this yesterday morning; was obliged to go and lunch at Lady Pollock's, and after that to take tea somewhere else, and had but time to rest a moment before I went to Lady William's. Came back at twelve, just dead. Obliged to go this morning to Florence to breakfast with her father, just come to town; came back at twelve. Went to church at three, because I dine at Van de Weyer's to-night; and I write now in haste to beg you to make no engagements for me after the 11th, as, if Mr. Mohl is not well, I shall whip over to Paris at a moment's notice, otherwise I shall go to Cold Overton. I'm going (if I can) to Mrs. Vaughan's to-morrow from 4 to 6.30. I dine at the Pollocks', who take me to the tragedy of "Medea." Humph! I like comedy best.

To Lady Augusta Stanley.

Cold Overton, Thursday, July 23, 1874.

DEAREST FRIEND,

I regret missing Dr. Temple very much; his conversation would never grow cold, because it leaves a movement in one's head. One of my nieces tells me he is Bishop of Exeter, for I had forgotten it, and, as he wrote in "Essays and Reviews," I am astonished that he is. I did not think there was so much sense in the appointments to bishoprics.

Our wedding went off yesterday very well, but I am shocked to see the absurd luxury of such useful and, in fact, indispensable operations as weddings. The breakfast sent from Leicester, with waiters, etc., would have nourished a whole parish for a week with good wholesome food, instead of kickshaws (taken from the French *quelquechose*); and in the primitive old-fashioned house it looked to me like a respectable old lady dressed out *en Vénus* with cupids and doves. I was exceedingly glad when it was all over, and the gathering dispersed this morning.

Tell Arthur I have finished "Lord Minto," and shall write my

satisfaction to the writer, who is wonderfully pretty to write such a clever book, too. I was not *ennuyéd* on my journey, for Lady Galway was on the platform, and came into my carriage, leaving her spouse alone, and we talked all the way. She was very entertaining.

When you have settled where you go and when, pray let me know, and the probabilities of your continental flights and studies of old France. Love to Arthur, and many thanks for the loan of the book.

Yours ever, dear kind friend,

MARY MOHL.

From Julius Mohl.

Paris, August 22, 1874.

MY DEAR MADAME SCHWABE,

I have been in Germany, and returned by Bonn and Cologne to see some old friends. Of course I went to see your daughter, and arrived there drenched and bespattered like a lost poodle. Madame Bins gave me her husband's *robe de chambre*, in which he found me, to his astonishment, when he came back; she kept me to dinner, and we had a good talk morning and evening. . .

I intend to go to London on September 1. Can you give me a bed? You know I want nothing but a cup of tea in the morning, and could get this easily at the Athenæum.

I write in great haste, as I am just like you, bothered with the world's and his mother's (and I believe a little with the devil's) business.

Yours very truly,

J. MOHL.

From Madame Mohl.

Cold Overton, September, 1874.

DEAR MINNIE,

Are you in London? I shall be there next week, in Clarges Street. Do let me know by writing beforehand. I have been in terrible spirits all the summer—first, Lady William's death; second, my poor sister is, I think, going, and especially her mind is so much weakened, that it is painful to see her and recollect what she was. That is the most painful of all that can happen; death is a favour compared to it. I have been so low ever since I came here (middle of July), that I have written to no one. Mr. Mohl is in Clarges Street; I shall be there on Tuesday or Wednesday. Pray write to tell me where you are. I want to get back to Paris. I am dreadfully

low, with Lady William's death and my sister's state, I wish to be where these terrible images will not constantly pursue me. I am not fit to bear really great afflictions. Pray, pray write.

Yours ever,
M. M.

In the autumn of this year Madame Mohl lent her apartments to the Dean and Lady Augusta, while she was at Stors. Lady Augusta had been much fatigued by travelling, and one day, while she and the Dean were walking in the Champs Elysées, her strength gave way suddenly. She was taken home, and the terrible illness followed from which she never recovered. Madame Mohl returned home to look after her.

January, 1875.

DEAR MINNIE,

Augusta's letters to me were far from reassuring, so that I came back and found her very ill. She had a doctor twice a day; could not stir from one bed to another without being carried; in short, it was a fever of six weeks, and I often expected she would never reach home alive. Poor Arthur was, of course, very anxious, so I kept my fears entirely to myself, and always represented the best side. I suppose the exertion was too much, for it brought on an inflammation in my eyelids, which I totally neglected. What remains of my hair is as white as this paper; besides which, I grew weaker and weaker, but I was so much occupied I took no care. It was only after they left (which I did my best to prevent being dreadfully uneasy) that I sent for Mussy, who gave me bark; but in a short time that brought on palpitations; in short, I got worse and worse, and never began mending till the beginning of January. I have been very slowly getting back my eyesight, as one of my eyes was under a bandage for weeks. If I have told you this history before, attribute my want of memory to my malady. I have been intending to write, but have been so listless I could not. Tell me all about the children.

Yours ever,
M. MOHL.

Later in the year I asked her to come to us; she replied—

Thank you most kindly for offered hospitality. I am at present such a poor creature—first by Lady Augusta's illness, which kept me ill till the end of the year and part of January; then in February I caught the *grippe*, which was a high fever lasting three weeks, and being imprudent and going out one morning, I got a relapse, and am but just recovering with much care and caution. I have not been to the play once since last spring! Think how bad I must have been! I shall go and stay at Hastings or St. Leonard's for sea air in June. That has set me up three different times in my life; perhaps it may do so once more. I shall just have a peep of you as I go through London to Cold Overton, which I shall do when I have got the spiriting up of the sea air.

With much love, yours,
M. MOHL.

From Julius Mohl.

Paris, June 25, 1875.

MY DEAR MADAME SCHWABE,

My wife is gone to St. Leonard's for the sea air, and to get up some strength. She had been mostly ill, and always very weak since Lady Augusta's unfortunate malady. She says she can walk at St. Leonard's infinitely better and longer than she could here, and is confident to recover part of her strength, which is very much to be wished for. Lady Augusta herself is miserably weak. She can neither walk nor write; all power of the muscles seems to be gone. If she remains so, it will be a great misfortune for her; and then for the dean, who will hardly be able or willing to travel about alone. He ought to have taken care of her not fatiguing herself; but as she never complained, they went on just as if nothing had been the matter with her.

I intend to go to Carlsruhe and Stuttgart on July 17, for about three weeks, and then go to England in the end of August or beginning of September to bring over my madame. She wants then to go to the Hague, which I hope will not come to pass, as I shall be quite satisfied with gadding about, having no mercury in my veins like you.

I have little to say on public affairs. We are going on in our ordinary foolish way, quarrelling and losing precious time, and legislating in a queer way, laying on very heavy taxes, and squandering the money on an enormous army, organizing a republic which may or may not last. If the extreme left should get the uppermost in the elections, the new assembly will bring on a Bonapartist *coup d'état;* if the moderate republicans get a majority, it may last a good while. But what can one predict in a country given up to universal suffrage?

It is miserably cold and rainy. The inundations in the south are fearful, which is a revenge of nature for the destruction of the forests which has gone on for centuries. They try now to replant them, but what can be done on the bare rocks? And even what is done is mostly destroyed by the goats, which have replaced the cows in the south, because they can live where a cow finds no longer nourishment.

I wish more than I hope that you have overcome the ecclesiastical difficulties of your school.* The Jesuits are here very powerful, and I suspect are so at Naples. It is inconceivable what they can swallow of miracles, of mythology, and priestly enterprise; but this is a long chapter for a letter.

Yours very gratefully,
J. MOHL.

Paris, July 4, 1875.

DEAR MADAME SCHWABE,

You are very kind to invite me to your house, and I shall certainly ask you as soon as I can fix the date of my going to England. It is of course a very great pleasure to me to have a friendly house in London to go to, but I can only accept it on condition that you would always tell me when you have other friends to invite. You know it is only in the dead season that I can travel—no difficulty in finding lodgings in London. Ainsi, je vous prie ne vous génez jamais pour moi.

I don't know what sort of weather you have got. Here it rains every day, and of course the heat is never oppressive. Notwithstanding this, there has been very little hay, the straw is miserably short, and the oats are starved, because the spring was very dry, so that

* Madame Schwabe's school at Naples for poor children.

we don't know how cattle is to be nourished; the company of the Omnibus, which keeps nine thousand big horses, is making contracts in America for hay. If this weather goes on the inundations will spread over the whole country, just as they have devastated the south. I believe this comes from the insane destruction of the forests which the southern provinces have carried on for centuries, and now they pay dearly for their savage improvidence and greed. The destruction of houses, roads, bridges, cattle, and produce seems to exceed ten millions sterling in the valley of the Garonne. The state will do a little, and I suppose the collection of money all over the country will bring in a million pounds. France cannot bear this new calamity without great difficulty. She has astonished the world by the rapidity with which she has paid the ransom, but she has suffered a great deal, and the taxes are very heavy indeed. The consequence is that living has become very dear. The wonder is that the country bears up against it; and if there could be any assurance of a government which would last, France would recover in a short time. The Bonapartists are much less rampant now, but they expect to get a great many seats in the new Chamber. They hope that the extreme republicans will get a majority, govern insanely, and so drive the middle classes towards a Bonapartist usurpation. It shows the folly of universal suffrage, that after Sedan, and after the Commune, the adherents of these two monstrosities should have any chance of governing the country. Alas, alas!

I cannot wonder that the excess of your moral and physical activity tells on you, and you must not give in, but make allowance for fatigue. The Italians ought to see that the education of their women is the first thing to do, and the state of things in Naples and Sicily ought to open their eyes.

But I must close my scribble, which will have been too much already for your poor eyes.

Yours very gratefully,
J. MOHL.

From Madame Mohl.

St. Leonard's, July 8, 1875.

DEAR MINNIE,

You are very kind. I shall come to the Charing Cross station at 1.40. I get in at Robertsbridge, because I sleep at

Madame Bodichon's. I leave this on Friday. I am so much better for the sea that I think I must come here next year.

Yours ever,

M. MOHL.

P.S.—I am quite well, and shall faint in nobody's house.

Madame Mohl alludes here to a fright she gave us in 1874, when she fainted away after a dinner-party in our house. She arrived on this occasion in restored health and spirits, except that she was much disturbed by the loss of a large sum of money, in coin and bonds, which she thought she had left at Madame Bodichon's. After a great deal of telegraphing and disturbance we found it in her hand-bag. The next letters, the last she wrote to her husband, about whom she was growing very anxious, are from the country. He had intended to visit his brother in Germany at this time.

Cold Overton, August 9, 1875.

*DEAR PUPS,

Since this morning, or rather ever since the day before yesterday, I have been tormenting myself about you. I reproach myself for leaving you alone; in short, life is a burden to me. . . . I am so upset by your letter, which I have just read over again, that I have quite lost my head. I shall be better presently, but as the post is just going I don't like to miss it.

Adieu, dear Pups,

M. M.

Lea Hurst, August 15.

Your letter of the 12th was a great comfort to me, for you seem a little better. As to the workmen, servants, etc., I am very philosophical on those matters; all I care for is that you should get well, and I think it would be very imprudent in you to run over to Germany to see M——. You know what railways are; you must climb, run, jump, hurry. What is easier than to put out again your

* These letters to M. Mohl are translations. The words in italics were written in English.

knee, which requires time to cure entirely? and if you hurt it at Strasburg, and were obliged to spend a month at an inn, how delightful that would be! If you will listen to me you will stay in Paris, or only go as far as Stors.

I stay here till the 19th, when I go to Knowsley till the 25th; then back here for three days, and then to Cold Overton. It remains to be seen what you will do, supposing that your knee goes on getting better and better. If it should get worse, it is clear that you ought to stay at home, unless you are ordered to some baths, in which case I should certainly go with you. I am delighted to think that we shall be together in three weeks.

Mr. Jowett spent three days here. He is *a man of mind;* I think he would suit you. He is, perhaps, going to Paris; pray be kind to him. If I were at home I should ask him to dinner. He is very fond of F——, which would also suit you. She is here, and her conversation is most nourishing. I would give a great deal for you to be here to enjoy it. She is really eloquent. Yesterday she quite surprised me.

Adieu, dear Pups. How glad I shall be to see you again!

M. M.

Knowsley, August 24.

I think I told you that I should stay here till Monday, when I return to Lea Hurst, and should leave again on Wednesday for Cold Overton; glad enough to find myself there again. I always remember Walter Scott, who wrote *that he felt like a poodle who has been standing on his hind-legs too long*, I am dying to recover my fore paws. Did you ever notice what sad eyes the Tourguénieffs' poodle has? There is a large silky-haired black dog here, into whose eyes I looked, and he was determined to follow me, although his master whistled for him; but his beautiful eyes were not sad! It gave me the same thrill of delight to look into them as men pretend to feel when they look into women's eyes.

M. M.

Cold Overton, September 5.

DEAR MINNIE,

I came back here three days ago from Lea Hurst and Knowsley. Odo Russell was at Knowsley, and sang all one evening.

You know the marvellous pleasure a beautiful voice gives me; but I wanted some Rossini and Bellini. He is as fond of them as I am; but, forsooth, his wife had only brought accompaniments for German music and some French. Confound the German music! Oh, that I should have been born under the reign of Rossini, and should have lived to see those vile Germans on the throne! *Encore*, if it was Mozart, Weber, or even some of the respectable entrancing old fellows; but it puts me in a rage to hear people in ecstasies at the music of Beethoven, a deaf man. The next thing will be raptures over the painting of a blind man. I'll maintain that music is above all a pleasure through the ears. I hope to be at home on Friday or Saturday at the latest. Poor Mr. Mohl has been laid up by the leg all the summer. I should not have left had he not declared he could walk a week after I left. No such thing! I enjoyed my visit at Knowsley very much; it was so much warmer than in these midlands, high upon the parting of the waters.

We had, moreover, at dinner the judges from Liverpool—great curiosities for an ignoramus like me. One a Sir James Willis, whom I did not hear talk, as he was by Lady Derby; the other Sir Baliol Brett, who, staying two days, talked plentifully; he was amusing. Also the high sheriff, a great curiosity, enormously rich. Both the judges had a man each to fondle them, called a marshal. Your spouse knows all that, but I don't, so I was much nourished.

Rue du Bac, October 28, 1875.

I never felt so utterly prostrate in my life as when I got here. I was as bad for nearly a fortnight, and then life seemed to return; but I am not my former self, and I feel in mourning for that dear former self—the cause I can't tell. Sometimes I hope to revive; sometimes I think I'm done for. My only hope is that by whining to my former friends they will reanimate me by their kindness; so I am writing *des lettres de faire part* to that effect. And this is one—to announce that I died last September, about the 3rd, and am coming to life again about the 28th October, inviting them, not to my burial, but to my christening, and hoping they will be as kind to the newborn as they were to the moribund.

Up to this time Paris has been more fit for my last stage than for this new one. Never was such an October, so cold, so rainy, so dismal. *D'abord*, nobody here. The Chevreux, where we used always

to go in the country, all down because M. Chevreux has a permanent *bronchite*. I went to the Tourguénieffs', and the sharp air, though only twelve miles off, brought me to life by absolute pinching.

Our politics are most curious. M——, a sort of Conservative, makes friends with the Bonapartists, because he fancies they are more likely to keep the country from anarchy than the republicans; and M. de B——, it is whispered, is growing republican for fear of the Bonapartists. They are all going tooth and nail at it next week, and nobody can guess the upshot. Adieu, dearest.

November 27, 1875.

DEAR MINNIE,

I have been so troubled all this month about Mr. Mohl that I have not answered your letters, nor anybody's else. He had been already very poorly as far back as when we were in London; he got gradually worse and worse in September and October, first unable to eat, thus getting weaker and weaker; the first doctor treating him for the liver. It is *not* the liver, says another doctor, who came two days ago. I have much to reproach myself with because I did not bestir myself to persuade him to consult a doctor sooner, and now he is so ill he can do nothing. He has constant pains in all his bones from weakness; can hardly stir, yet will not keep his bed. I tremble lest he should soon be obliged to do so. I am very unhappy; sometimes I think he will never be better. I get in despair; I fight against it. If they did but know what it is! He can't take anything but some milk. We have made a sort of essence of meat, and that seems to revive him a little, but nothing as yet can explain the cause of this state.

A dear friend of mine, Duchess Colonna, has been obliged to stay in Switzerland for a cough, instead of coming here. She would have been a great comfort to me. She asks me to send her Carlyle's "Hero-Worship;" she has set her heart on having it. It is not published in Tauchnitz. If you should be able to get it, I should be most obliged if you will send it to me, and I will send it on. Tell me what it costs and I'll pay you. Adieu, dear friend. May Heaven preserve your husband and children.

Yours ever,

M. M.

P.S.—My brother-in-law, Robert Mohl, died on the 5th of this

month, which greatly increased my husband's illness. It was a great trouble to *me;* but this is so much worse!

December, 1875.

Thank you most kindly, dearest Minnie, about the book. I think it much safer to send it by Miss King. I am totally sequestered from society, for my poor husband has been very ill this month. I was half-crazy the last half of November, for the doctors could make nothing of him, he was so bad; he is a little better now. I had two nights last month during which I thought he never would recover, and I was so overturned those two days, that my arm and hand were quite without feeling, and my speech embarrassed. I thought I should have a stroke. The doctor said the blood would not go to my brain. It passed away when he got better.

I shall do anything I can for Miss King, for I like her much. I can invite no one, but am delighted to see waifs and strays. The cold here is awful; I never suffered so much in my life from cold. I am miserable.

December, 1875.

I believe I have thanked you already for the book. I have been so wretched all this month I don't know what I have written or said. The doctor this morning has set my poor head right again by telling me Mr. Mohl will get well with careful management. I was down in the abyss of despair; now I am ready to jump over the table like the cow over the moon. This moment I heard that Max Müller had given his resignation. We are all astounded—such a pet lamb as he was! It seems quite a European event among the *savants* here. Did they affront him, and was he like the unwise man Dr. Johnson talks of, who always slept out of doors under London Bridge when any one affronted him in joke or earnest? Adieu; I'm interrupted.

It will be seen from the preceding letters that Madame Mohl was not blind to her husband's danger, though she tried by every means to hope for the best. He never got over the Franco-German War, or ceased to lament the enmity between his own and his adopted country. After his brother Robert's death he failed more and more rapidly. The doctors

could not bear utterly to destroy the hopes of his wife, and she was actually taken by surprise when, in the early morning of January 4, he breathed his last.

"He had been struggling for breath for four or five hours, worse and worse. He stroked my face all the time, but could not speak. That stroking has been an ineffable comfort to me; it was an endearment when he could not speak; the only sign he could give me of his affection, and that he knew it was I that was with him." *

* Letter to Mrs. Wynne Finch in 1877, on the anniversary of M. Mohl's death.

CHAPTER XIV.

WIDOWHOOD.

1876–1883.

Madame Mohl's utter prostration and despair—Sensation caused by the death of Julius Mohl—Speeches at his funeral—Letters to Dean Stanley and Lady Derby—The "Shah Nameh"—Development of mind in the East—Visit to Bournemouth—Bulgarian atrocities—Visit to Berlin—Effect of want of air—Return to Paris—Editorial troubles—Thiers in 1870—Last meeting with him—Lady Eastlake's articles—Titian and Correggio—England should support Turkey—Disappointment about article in the *Edinburgh*—Opening of the Exhibition of 1878—Abhorrence of Russia—Remorse at having left her husband—Absence of mind—Julius Mohl's letters—Sudden visit to England—Max Müller's article—Asia more venerated abroad than in England—Lock-jaw in the country—Miss Weston's recollections—Madame Mohl in 1879—Lady Derby's letters—Kinglake's book—Visits Bournemouth again—Reception at home in former times—Julius Mohl's reports—Happiness in marriage—Hard winter—Ice—The Seine frozen—Importance of the rivers—Effect of thaw—Civilization in India—France before the Revolution—Madame de Rémusat's book—Gladstone and D'Israeli—Good sense better than eloquence—Léon Say ambassador—Visit to Holland House—Senior's "Conversations"—Mrs. Bagehot's visit—Memory—Death of Dean Stanley—Visit to Cornwall Gardens—Sad last letter—Madame Mohl's illness—At rest.

MADAME VON SCHMIDT, who had been telegraphed for as soon as her uncle's danger was imminent, writes—

Klagenfurt, July 19, 1886.

When I arrived in Paris on the morning of the 4th, all was over. He lay still and quiet in his bed. My aunt sat upstairs in the spare room, rocking herself to and fro before the fire, not crying, but nearly out of her mind. She would not see me, so I went back to the Tourguénieffs' and waited in the Rue de Lille until my aunt sent for me, which she did on the evening of the same day. Albert Tourguénieff helped me in all the arrangements of the funeral; I do not

know what I should have done without these kind friends. At first poor aunty did not show her grief; she was like one stunned by the shock of a blow.

Madame Mohl wrote a few days afterwards to her friend Madame Rothan—

(*Translation.*)

January 19, 1876.

DEAR MADAME,

I felt the kindness of your letter much more than I should have appreciated a visit from you a fortnight ago. It is a great mistake for people to go in crowds to visit a poor creature who has just lost all that made life worth having, who has been felled to the earth by a heavy blow, and who is almost out of her senses.

Not to appear ungrateful (and I am not naturally so), the friends who come with such kind intentions must be kindly received, although one is not fit to see anybody, and is almost driven wild by so great a calamity. Alas! this has been my case. I am now resigned, and can bear, and even be grateful for, the sight of a kind and pitying face. I tell all this to you, dear madame, who understand me; but I do not wish that those who endeavoured to show their sympathy with my grief should know how much I suffered from their kindness. I have always had a particular liking and sympathy for you, and my dear husband shared the feeling. You can well understand, therefore, that I was pleased at your not forgetting me—as soon as I became reasonable and capable of reflection.

Je suis toute à vous,

M. MOHL.

The death of Julius Mohl caused a profound sensation among all men of science and learning throughout Europe. The speeches at his funeral show how deep the feeling was in France.

M. Alfred Maury, president of the branch of the Academy connected with inscriptions, and keeper of the Archives, said—

The death of M. Mohl has filled us with consternation. We never thought that the illness which has prevented his attending our

meetings for the last two months would have a fatal termination. Neither did he suspect the seriousness of his state; for when I called on him, less than a fortnight ago, I found him full of confidence in a speedy recovery.

After enumerating his services, M. Maury continued—

In communication with all the Orientalists in Europe and even beyond the ocean, surrounded by their esteem and enjoying a legitimate authority over them, he had become a sort of prism in which was reflected even the faintest ray of the brilliant light shed by the East over the ancient history and geography of Asia.

M. Maury was followed by M. Laboulaye (member of the Institut and director of the Collége de France).

M. Mohl was the model of *savants* and professors; his zeal never relaxed. This very year, while suffering cruelly, he insisted on opening his course, and stopped only when overpowered by illness. But it was not alone by books or lectures that our dear colleague served and honoured the Collége de France; he gave us powerful assistance in the most delicate of our functions—the choice of a professor for a vacant chair. He had in the highest degree the sense of the responsibility which weighed on us. For him science was a religion, and he would have liked to exclude all profane persons. And with what warmth he supported those whom he considered faithful servants of truth!

M. Régnier, vice-president of the Asiatic Society, and M. Hauréau, director of the Imprimerie Nationale, added their testimony to the great learning and virtues of their illustrious *confrère*. In conclusion. M. Hauréau said—

He was chosen for our counsellor, we accepted him as our model. We shall ever venerate the memory of this learned, devoted, and modest man, whose almost sudden death has caused us such intense pain.

Professor Max Müller wrote a short notice of M. Mohl in

the *Pall Mall Gazette* (January 10, 1876). He concludes with an extract from a speech of M. Renan's, which I cannot forbear quoting in the beautiful French of the original:—

"Le grand titre de M. Mohl à la reconnaissance des savants est cependant, avant tout, l'influence qu'il a exercée. Il sut présider à nos études avec une solidité de jugement et un esprit philosophique qui seuls peuvent donner de la valeur à des travaux épars et sans lien apparent. Ce lien, il le créait par sa judicieuse et savante critique; son autorité aidait les amis de la vérité à distinguer le mérite sérieux des succès faciles qu'on trouve souvent auprès du public en flattant ses goûts superficiels. Par là M. Mohl a occupé dans nos études une place de premier ordre; le vide qu'il a laissé ne sera pas de sitôt rempli. Ami du vrai et du solide en toutes choses, il ne faisait aucun part à la vanité, à l'envie de briller. Sa direction a été aussi efficace qu'éclairée. M. Mohl était pour nous tous une des raisons que nous avions de vivre et de bien faire." *

How true it is to say of such men as Mohl, "They make us live and do well"! They keep us from making concessions, from taking what is called an easier view of life, from making to ourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteous praise. That his friends at Paris should have allowed him to maintain that independent position through life, that they should have yielded to his silent influence, that they should not have resented his occasional reproofs, reflects the highest credit on the French character.

In sending the following extract from Dean Stanley's papers, Mr. Walrond writes, "It seems to me delightfully characteristic of the writer's simplicity and directness and honesty."

Madame Mohl to Dean Stanley.

March 4, 1876.

I was and am still overwhelmed with grief. You are now as bereaved as I am; we are both deprived of all that made life enjoyable.

* Translation of the concluding sentences: "A friend to truth and sincerity in every form, he made no allowance for vanity or the desire to shine. His guidance was as useful as it was enlightened. He was for us all a motive for good deeds and a good life."

I do what I can to bear it. I wish, however, to live long enough to execute my dear husband's wishes, and then I wish to die; for life is fatiguing to me. I wish I had as firm a faith as you have, my dear Arthur. I wish I could buy that sturdy belief, that we should surely meet again, which I see in other people; but I have not been brought up in it, and faith is a habit of the mind. I am, therefore, more to be pitied than you are, and I could look at you with envy, if it were not that my friendship for you makes me glad that you have such a trust. I wish you could impart it to me; I am sure you would be glad. I don't say it is *not* so; I only don't feel as many do whom I have seen *without* a doubt.

Madame von Schmidt stayed for three months with her aunt, helping her to arrange her papers. In the following summer Madame Mohl passed through London without stopping. She wrote to Lady Derby—

Cold Overton, July 11, 1876.

DEAREST LADY AND KINDEST FRIEND,

How ungrateful I must have appeared to you, so sympathizing as you have been! I have no cause to plead but my great, my unutterable grief, and your large heart understands it. . . . I could not write this winter, I was so dead. I am, I suppose, something better, for I now can write; but I have always the same blank before me. I had much to do at Paris that I was obliged to attend to. I had my dear husband's papers to look over, and they are so numerous; but I was obliged to do it, and I have made arrangements for publishing several things. The translation in French of the great epic poem, the "Shah Nameh," which he was charged to do by the French Government in 1828, publishing the Persian text, was happily finished, and he had still a volume of notes, *éclaircissements*, index, etc., to do; but the real thing was finished, both text and translation. I know not if it is known in England, but when Louis XVIII. came back to the throne, he had a minister (Duc de Richelieu) who had been governor of the Crimea under Alexander; he was a most enlightened man, and began a scientific movement, which lasted the whole of Louis XVIII.'s reign, part of Charles X.'s, and was not extinguished under Louis Philippe. One of his projects was publishing

at the great national printing-office all the great monuments of literature of the East in their own languages. He (Richelieu) obtained the decree, and the vast expenses necessary for it, somewhere about 1822 or 1825. The movement continued under Charles X., because what is decreed takes a long time to be executed. The effects lasted not only during the following ten years, but the great encouragement and impetus which was given then to science and literature—a reaction after the warlike *régime* of Napoleon—was the first cause of the literary movement, which went on under Louis Philippe, going a little down by degrees, but only dying out entirely under the wonderfully deadening influence of the luxurious Louis Napoleon. From what I have seen during my own lifetime of the history of mind, I think it follows a general law, and I don't see why it should not. Nothing is more mysterious than the growth of civilization or its destruction. It's as impossible to see its progress as that of an oak, working itself on during three centuries; but you may measure its growth every twenty years, and have some suspicion of the mental measurements, which are still more difficult to see. But to return to my reason for telling you this. My husband, then very young, left about 1825 the German University, and arrived in Paris when this movement had acquired its full impetus. He saw, or thought he saw, a wonderful development of mind (which I should call civilization) in the ancient monuments of Asiatic literature, and that it had never been examined, or even suspected, to the extent it deserved. This threw him into Orientalism head and heels, and all he did to forward it has given him a European reputation. Though Asia was the subject, this epic poem is like Homer for early Greece; therefore you will not wonder at the importance I attach to the publication of it, and to the other objects which interested him; and the only solace I can have is doing the very little I can to rescue from oblivion what he took such deep interest in, and I tell you this that you may still esteem me enough to believe that I am not quite absorbed by selfish grief, that you may be indulgent and excuse my apparent neglect; for you have one of those high and noble minds I am too happy to have known, and even in all my grief I know how to value the prize. I have been absorbed in trying to pick up the spars and wrecks of this monument he tried to erect of ancient civilization. He it was who indicated Nineveh to Botta, and to the minister who obtained

money from Government to dig it out; and three other travellers who were in Arabia were equally assisted by him. It is these proofs of his impassioned energy for bringing back the past that I should so wish to show, and as I must have appeared ungrateful for your most kind note, I must give you this blundered blotted account of my poor self. Adieu, dear lady; a little word would gratify me much.

Yours ever,

MARY MOHL.

P.S.—I ought to write this abominable scrawl again, but I shall put it in the fire if I attempt it, and you are so good you will excuse me, and not read it if it is too much trouble.

We spent the summer of 1876 at Bournemouth, and knowing Madame Mohl's liking for the sea, I invited her to come to us; and we met there in August, for the first time since her bereavement. It was easy to see that she had received a blow from which she would never recover; still she was incapable of dismal despondency, and her elastic spirits rebounded at intervals. She loved the sea and the woods, and all the sights and sounds of the country. The house (Upton, the dwelling of Admiral Henry Grey) contained an excellent library of interesting old books, and into these she plunged eagerly. I can see her now, perched upon a high stool, examining a large map of Dorsetshire which hung in the hall. We had a house full of children and young people with whom she was always a great favourite, and, attached to the establishment, a basket pony-chaise which carried her about, and saved her much fatigue, although her love for animals was so great that she insisted upon walking up all the hills. She wrote of this visit to Lady Eastlake—

The house belonged permanently to an admiral; he lets it with all his furniture and all his books. Is it not a touching trait of confidence in the owner? I laid it up in my head as a fine trait of my countrymen, and it increased my esteem for the navy, as it was a great addition to my satisfaction. My love for children greatly added to the *agrément*. Unluckily they will grow up.

Nowhere in England out of London are there more interesting people than at that time there were in Bournemouth. Sir Henry and Lady Taylor, Mr. and Mrs. Reeve, Sir Henry and Lady Drummond Wolff, Sir Percy and Lady Shelley, Mrs. Newman Smith, Mr. and Mrs. Shaen, were all delighted to welcome our dear old friend; and, living at a little distance, were some other friends of hers, Dr. and Mrs. Allman, "whom," she wrote, "I have known for years—a distinguished naturalist; I like him and his wife much." She stayed with us till a day or two before we left, and was even able to make excursions into the New Forest. It was the year of the so-called "Bulgarian atrocities," the crusade against which seemed to her exaggerated and absurd. She wrote to Lady Derby—

October 11, 1876.

DEAREST LADY,

My habitual low spirits have not prevented me from thinking constantly of you, and admiring the sense and temper, or command of temper, of Lord Derby. I am absolutely sick of the nonsense that is going on, and at the conceit of the nation supposing that we can make all Europe do what we think right and what *is* right; it is perfectly absurd. As to Gladstone, it is the madness of disappointed ambition, and would not be worth minding if the public was not so ignorant and conceited as to suppose that we have the power to make all Europe humane by showing our fists at them. I suppose that the Russians have been working underhand a good while to excite those foolish and unfortunate Servians, etc., and other Christians to free themselves. I remember well the movement towards 1825 or thereabouts, when the Greeks were much worse treated than these have been; but it never came into anybody's head that we alone were to go to war all across Europe to make the Turks behave themselves well; for that is, I suppose, what these absurd people are aiming at. I can't imagine what they would do if they were at the helm—whether they would expect the nation to raise an army to go and turn the Turks out of Europe! Even the Crusaders only attempted to take Jerusalem, and all Europe was of

one mind; and individuals went, not governments did it." Could not one advise these people to go off crusading, with Gladstone at their head, instead of sitting at home trying to make the nation go?

I assure you, dear lady, that though a letter from such a sympathizer as you are is most valuable to me, I never feel anything but affectionate regret when I receive no letter from you; I know how agitated your life must be. It seems to me that the nation is growing a *leetle*, very leetle, wiser, and all, I think, owing to the reasonable and self-commanding conduct of Lord Derby, which I am sure you must be proud of; and in my solitary and melancholy occupation of reading old letters and sorting papers, I think of your agitated life with the greatest interest. I must own to the greatest horror of war, and the terror of sacrificing our good, hardworking countrymen to go across Europe and get killed for the Russians to take Turkey—for that would be the upshot.

Adieu, dearest lady; every letter is precious, but don't write when it is an effort, and believe me yours ever,

MARY MOHL.

After her husband's death, Madame Mohl's great and almost only interest was in publishing her husband's Asiatic reports and translation of the "Shah Nameh" in a readable form, and in sorting and arranging his letters. This occupation, sad and wearying to any one, was doubly trying at her age, and with her failing memory. Her letters this winter were very sad, relating almost entirely to her literary troubles.

In the spring of 1877 M. Mohl's niece, Anna, wife of the celebrated Professor Helmholtz, came to stay with her, and persuaded her aunt to return with her to Berlin.

Paris, March, 1877.

DEAREST MINNIE,

I'm a poor creature, and have not the slightest idea how I shall bear the wear and tear of going to Berlin—a very cold place. But I think I could do something for my husband's nephew; it's a very vague notion, hid in the corner of my mind, therefore don't you show it to the light, for light is the bitter enemy of all enterprise.

We shall go from here in ten days. I shall remain away five weeks or so. My house is at your disposal. I hope dear little Gay* will come here when she passes through. I shall write to you if I go to Berlin; it would be too early for Gay to leave the south.

I have not the slightest idea of going anywhere for my amusement, but I would go to Pekin if I had any probability of being useful to my husband's family.

Berlin, March 16.

. . . I had entirely renounced coming here four days ago, but my niece Anna was going away Wednesday morning when a sudden change came over me, without any reason, and I consented to come off next morning. I began a letter to you to say that the house was at your service, and I repeat the same. I reproach myself bitterly for not writing to you from Paris. . . . [Here follow all sort of minute directions for my comfort.] I shall write by to-day's post, telling Sophie Quirins, one of my friends, and certainly the most devoted, to help you in all your little bothers, and I think all will go very smooth.

All my friends say they are glad I came here, so I suppose it was a wise thing. I have wished myself at home a hundred times; it cost a great effort.

Don't hurry away, for I shall not be home till the latter part of April at soonest.

Yours ever,
M. M.

I had accepted Madame Mohl's kind offer for the sake of taking my young people and showing them all the sights of Paris, but the serious illness of a near and dear relation made me put off my visit, and I heard with astonishment, from a friend in Paris, that Madame Mohl had suddenly returned home. She wrote to me—

Paris, April 3.

I was obliged to come home to be nursed, I was so ill. I believe the living for a fortnight without oxygen was the real cause.

* My elder daughter, of whom Madame Mohl was exceedingly fond. She always went to the Rue du Bac on her way to and from the south.

The cold was very great, and no air ever enters the rooms. The windows are all double and closed hermetically, so that to get a mouthful of air seems impossible, and one pants for it. I absolutely gasped at times, and when you get out the cold bites like an animal; breathing the air has nothing of the renovating sensation it has here. I arrived here yesterday morning, after twenty hours' rolling along. I don't know that I should have had courage to come alone, but a very nice young lady,* who is governess of our princess's eldest daughter, told me she was coming to see her brother here on Monday, and she would take care of me. This was too good an opportunity to be neglected.

Paris, April 5, 1877.

In answer to your kind post-card, I hasten to say that I am much better. Imagine a human being having been under a pneumatic machine for a fortnight, the walls all hot, just coming out into the ambient air. That was my case—all my own stupid fault. The pneumatic machine was not agreeable. I had not the slightest idea of what was the matter with me, and went on without oxygen, wondering why I felt half-dead; all owing to the wonderful skill of the Prussian house-builders and carpenters—the double windows, the warm walls, all so beautifully fitting in, that not a particle of the dear ambient atmosphere can enter by any chance into the house—the thing of all things we sigh for in Paris, to be weather-tight. A French carpenter thinks nothing of a quarter-inch of wind coming in at every window, and thinks one a fidgety quiddle if one finds fault; for which, as a remedy, they nail untidy, dust-nourishing *bourrelets*, as they call them—a substitute for what they call "list" in England—round doors and windows to cover the slit through which the wind passes. Now, my bedroom at Berlin was a perfection of snugness; as to a slit, I believe a Prussian carpenter has not an idea of such a possibility; nothing can exceed their neatness. I am the chilliest of mortals, and therefore never opened my window. I did feel a little smothery at times, but warmth is my delight, and I went on very well as long as I could get out every day; but, having to go to a grand *soirée*, I thought I must husband my little strength and stay at home all day. That was the first time I began to feel the utter *décadence* of my vitality, and I tried to open the window,

* Mademoiselle de Perpigna.

a great difficulty, and no doubt the biting air gives one a broad hint. It required several days for me to understand what I wanted. I got weaker and weaker, and it was only the morning I left Berlin that I fully understood that my half-dead state was entirely owing to my own folly and coddling habits, which I might indulge in without danger in Paris, where every door and window was correcting me all day; for not one ever shuts well here, to the great discontent of the English and the well-being of the natives. I am now come to life again, and, though a poor creature, can do as much as usual. My house is still in such an untidy state—however, you will see; come and breakfast every morning if you like, and sit by the garden window.

When you come, if you are too tired to call on me here, send me word, and I'll go to you immediately. I'll do all I can to be well while you are here, and make myself useful.

Yours in great haste,

MARY MOHL.

I did not like to disappoint my young people, but we were too large a party to invade the Rue du Bac; we therefore took up our quarters at the Hôtel St. Romain on April 7, and I saw Madame Mohl every day for nearly a month. Now that it was over, she looked back with great pleasure to her visit to Berlin, where she had seen all the most interesting people, and was surrounded with attentions for her own sake, and, what she valued still more, for her husband's. The Empress Augusta summoned her to a private audience. She greatly admired the Crown Princess, and she told me that the Crown Prince did her the honour of talking to her the whole of one evening, principally in praise of his wife, who, he said, was the cleverest and most remarkable woman in Europe.

I had not been in Paris since 1871, when all was in confusion; but M. Mohl was alive at that time, and we were merry enough in spite of the desolation around. But now the *salon* in the Rue du Bac was painfully silent. She often

to the end of her life, talked of resuming her Friday evening receptions, but she never had the courage to do so.

Life is a series of dissolving views. Almost all the friends of her earlier years, even those who were much younger than herself, were gone, and she had not now the heart to make new acquaintances. Out of kindness to me she invited a few people to dinner one day, but she was so ill that she was obliged to put them off. In a day or two she recovered, and at intervals regained all her former brilliancy. We used to have the most delightful little *tête-à-tête* dinners, after which she would doze on the sofa till tea-time, when she would rouse up again and never be willing to let me go.

Mrs. Lewes (George Eliot) wrote of her at this time—

The Priory, 1877.

But please tell our dear Madame Mohl that I retain a happy memory of her pleasant visit here during her last stay in London, and that I am glad to have some news of her through you. The last I had was from M. Scherer, to whom his wife had sent word that she had found the dear old lady sobbing bitterly in her solitude. That left a sad impression on my mind, and I like to know now that you are added to the other friends of many years who can give her their cheering presence.

M. E. LEWES.

Madame Mohl spent six weeks in London this year at the Deanery, with us and with other friends, chiefly occupied in trying to do justice to the memory of her husband. She was most anxious to have his Asiatic reports reviewed in the *Edinburgh* by Professor Max Müller; but a severe domestic affliction prevented his doing this, and it was a bitter disappointment to Madame Mohl. She returned to Paris very much out of heart, and thence went down to Stors.

To Miss Martin.

Chez Monsieur Chevreux, Château de Stors, August 1877.

This country is in a great turmoily state, which you are not aware of. The Duc de Broglie and a very large party of the higher classes have set their minds on having back as much of the old government as they can, and some say they have made an alliance with the Bonapartists to take back the boy who remains, rather than leave the republic to get on in its own way.

Thiers it was who made the peace with the Germans in 1870, when the whole country was in anarchy; and he alone wandered about from England and Germany to see what he could do—that I know, for he sent for Mr. Mohl, when he lived very near, to go and see him, and my spouse was touched to see the anguish he felt for his country. As he had been always a marked man for his political capacities and an eloquent speaker, he made some effect. He went back to France, called an assembly at Bordeaux, consented to be the man who would come forward to make proposals to the allies (no one else dared, because every one said they would be for ever hated if they talked of asking for peace). He had that courage, and got the best conditions he could. Immense sums were asked by the Prussians. (I don't blame them; they had been ruined by Boney in 1806, the wonder was that they were collected and paid), and the territory remained free. People said—and they were right—that Thiers had made the peace, and those who could reason said that few but him could have done it; and I say the same, but I can explain it. His passion for France and his peculiar temperament carried him through; and that was a rare alliance, added to a position that was also a rarity. If a mad bull came to toss a child, and the mother by strong emotion snatched it away just before, no one could say that woman had strong reason and courage, etc.; supposing that the bull was surprised for a moment. No, no; Thiers was like the mother. His passion for France made him run over Europe; his passion made him master of the French just then; his passion made him face the mad bull (the nation) and snatch the child. It's a fine thing, but it is not to be done by will, even by the strongest. He was not master of himself, fear was obliterated by the involuntary ardour. These things happen once in two or three hundred years. Such was Joan of Arc.

However, Thiers ever since has excited in a large party a different feeling from any other political celebrity. He is now past eighty, and though of course many false-minded and absurd persons form parties of all shades and sorts, there is a bit of truth and honesty somewhere, and the present set at the head of the government have more selfishness and less disinterested qualities than the others, besides being absurd and stroking the nation the wrong way of its hair. But Thiers has remained the same; he loves the nation, and he is at the head of the opposition. Those who are reasonable want to try and make as honest a republic as they can, and keep to its laws; and they have great respect for Thiers. The whole country is in a ferment to try and get rid of the present set, who have governed for the last nine months only. They are making elections, and Thiers was here the other day. I had not seen him close for at least twelve years. His face is grown fixed, as it were; he is older of his age a great deal than many I know; his behaviour quieter; but it is the same man.

This department is electing new members, and Thiers was invited by my friends the Chevreux to come on the election day to make a speech in favour of the man they want to name a *député*. So all the electors came and cheered and made a row. A grand breakfast was given to the grand electors, and a good deal of liquids to the smaller ones in the garden. I think *I* had the best of it, for my old friend came and talked to me of our early days, and seemed quite glad to see me.

The account of this interview is contained in a letter to Lady Derby, quoted on page 8. The following is the concluding paragraph—

Poor Thiers had gone to London and all over Europe in 1871, like old Belisarius, and absolutely forgot his own old self in his ardour for his country. My dear husband happened to be in London very near him, and called on Thiers. He was out, but sent to him to ask him to come next morning, at what o'clock, think you? Half-past five in the morning. They had been long intimate, and my husband wrote to me (I was in the country), quite touched—Thiers wanted his advice. He went from thence to Holland, I think, and it is wonderful

the effect he produced on all who saw him; but, as they all say, he alone put ardour enough into it to obtain the peace both at home and abroad. My husband had never been a great admirer before, but this quite overcame him, for the whole man forgot himself in his anxiety for his country. Since that he behaved as well as possible; he went out of the presidency when it was legal, he did wonders to stroke down the nation (no easy matter) under the heavy payment, and I believe he won the respect of all Europe. Since the 26th of May they have, as much as possible, destroyed all he did. As the Chamber is to be renewed, the whole country is in a fever, and, as far as I can judge, the moderate republicans, who wish to conform to what was agreed in '71, are the majority of the nation; I do not speak of the mob, for they showed what they were capable of after the siege: I mean the large middle class.

I have several long letters from Madame Mohl written during this winter; they relate almost entirely to her literary troubles, and would not interest the public. Moreover, they are very painful, as they show how unequal she was to cope with her difficulties. There was no one who afforded her so much help as Lady Eastlake, with whose artistic tastes she likewise sympathized.

To Lady Eastlake.

Rue du Bac, January 13, 1878.

DEAREST BEST FRIEND,

It is so long since I have bothered you with my letters that I have lost the thread of my discourse; it was not from any other motive but discretion. You have a work on the stocks in which I take a great interest. I was talking to an artist yesterday about Correggio having sometimes, and I believe generally, painted his pictures in grey to get in the drawing, and colouring them afterwards. I have seen one (I forget where), all the greys done and only a portion in colours. This artist declares that Titian often did the same. As I have had much handling of the brush in my life, it was always a subject of great interest to me. Old Mr. Smirke was very fond of me, and used to take great interest in my efforts. He it was who first told me that Correggio had done this, but I never heard

that any other colourist had, and this about Titian surprised me. My artist declared that Rubens did also. Now, that seems to me wonderful, because there appears such a *furore* in his way of painting that one can hardly conceive he did it otherwise than slap-dash. Do you enter into any of these mechanical details of Titian's work? I am very curious about it. . . .

I shall be thankful for a letter, but don't write if it is inconvenient. I have been rather better and more reasonable this last month than I have been these two years.

January 23, 1878.

DEAREST FRIEND,

I gobbled up the review * as soon as caught. I am too much of the brush to be a good judge. All these *recherches* about colour, etc., are and have been part of my life and occupation, so I don't judge like a reader, but like a painter, and find satisfaction in a hundred details and little touches of light and shade slipping in in some queer or novel way which no one else would ever observe. It gives an intense satisfaction which others cannot even perceive. It was a bold undertaking in you to give all alive an artist who was so entirely absorbed by art. I wonder, by-the-by, if there were many as completely so as Titian? Not many, I should think. The man disappears, and leaves nothing but the painter.

I should like to know about the time of the appearance of Max Müller's morsel, because I shall soon think of having the pamphlets printed in a book, as they contain much thought and valuable knowledge nowhere else to be found. Of course, I should like Max Müller's to come out first. What do you think? Oh, how I wish that you could go upstairs easily! But you have a brain which makes up for all to you, though not to us. Adieu, dearest friend.

M. MOHL.

February 25, 1878.

DEAR MINNIE,

This is to introduce to you the new secretary to the French embassy. *She* is granddaughter to Madame Chevreux, and very clever; and they are both mightily pleasant, agreeable people.†

I am half mad with anger at the English government not having

* On Titian and his works. † M. and Madame de Montebello.

taken up the cudgels last year for the Turks, and being so blind as not to see that the Russians, having the north of Asia, are our natural enemies. Really, this blindness is something wonderful, and they are hypocritical enough to put it on the score of religion. Adieu.

In great haste, yours ever,

M. M.

To Lady Eastlake.

April 18, 1878.

DEAREST FRIEND,

I hope you don't think I have not thought as much about you as if I had written. Oh no, I am always thinking about you; but the truth is, my spirit is broken, and I have scarcely written to England except to my nieces. I was quite crushed—I dare say you understand it—and if you did not write you felt for me. I never doubt your friendship—never. I am worse than I was, and this last blow * has taken away all the spring necessary to carry on the business of life. That is why I have not written; but I *must* know something about you who have been my best friend. I feel as if the limbs of my mind were broken; but I may perhaps get a little better, and a friend can do me good. I just now saw one who was very fond of my dear husband, and also of the poor Queen of Holland. I could not help crying bitterly; but it did me good, and brought those choice spirits back to my mind.

Miss Wyse has been a benefactress to me, for in my present low state the interest I have taken in her has done me good, and occupied me when nothing else could.

Madame Mohl was very hospitable during the Exhibition of 1878, and her kindness to others enabled her to bear the sadness of her great loss. In the following letters her old sense of fun crops up.

May 31, 1878.

DEAR MINNIE,

I have been intending to write every day these six weeks to know how you are getting on. As to myself, I have little to say. . . . I think you will have a poor opinion of me when I tell

* The disappointment about the article in the *Edinburgh*.

you that I have not yet been to this gigantic fair, dread of the fatigue being the overruling impression. I went May 1 (having two tickets for Miss Wyse and me) to the opening in the great sprawling, useless building called Trocadero. Nothing to be seen but the Invalides across the river and the esplanade before it, entirely spoilt by the booths for the future fair. The object of our going—to see Marshal MacMahon coming over the bridge at the head of a great many horse-soldiers, between rows of a great many foot-soldiers. They walked along at the sound of music to the Trocadero, for which sprawling building they have shaved down a hill opposite the Champ de Mars, which was the prettiest height outside of Paris. It was very steep; it came down to the river-side in terraces, on which were houses and gardens, which looked like gigantic steps. On the highest of all was a school, whence we could see all Paris, and far off on the right St. Cloud, and far on the left Notre Dame and all the distant country, and in the foreground the Champ de Mars all covered with trees. They shaved off the hill at the cost of millions. It was the finest view about Paris. Louis Napoleon began by shaving off little Chaillot—such a nice place—a sort of little town out of Paris. In it was the convent to which Madame de la Vallière ran to escape from Louis XIV. It was full of romantic recollections.

I was so cross with sitting three hours to see nothing at all but soldiers strutting after MacMahon. I suppose he came into the Trocadero by a fine portico; but I could not see that, being on one side. There were three showers, or rather torrents, during the operation of marching to the Trocadero; up, up went thousands of umbrellas; the too-tooing went on all the same; the ladies out of doors crowded under the umbrellas and seated themselves on the grass. I suppose they kept the ground dry with the most solid part of their persons. There were as many out as indoors. We thought ourselves lucky to be kept dry at both ends. We were obliged to come home on foot, it being impossible to find one's carriage.

You know Miss Wyse—she is a very interesting person; and I have had Miss Grant also, who has a statue in the Exhibition. *Very* good it is, but I fear she will not get all the success she deserves, for nobody judges for himself; it's all those who get puffed and are clever at that. I am as vexed as possible with the papers to see how little people know good from bad.

I have had already a houseful, and shall go on as long as I am here, as I have three batches of nephews and nieces, all from England. I have not room to invite my German ones. I will lend you my house in July or August, if you like to have it. I live as solitary as ever, having no spirits; but I was obliged to give one dinner for Lord and Lady Derby. It was a great effort, but I got through it. Why should they side with Russia? For my own part I abhor the Russians, and if I were a man I would spend my last breath and penny to help the poor Turks. I think we have behaved like fools, and base fools, forgetting how the Turks sided with us all through Bonaparte's power. I did not say all this to Lord Derby, but I did to the Duke of Bedford, who is much more reasonable; he is quite charming. They wanted to see Léon Say and Renan and Taine. It's astonishing how greedy the English are of Taine; they have such whims, it's quite comical. Lord Houghton called two days before with such a pretty, slight daughter. They came in the evening; I had not room for them at dinner. Adieu, dear. Pray write to me.

June 13, 1878.

. . . If I had nothing to do but to read my dear husband's letters, and judge if they would do as much honour to his memory as it appears to me that they ought, I should think my life just endurable; but with these odious impediments and an execrably bad memory, I often think what a good thing it would be if a strong large thing was just to press on my throat for a quarter of an hour and put an end to my worries. I try to think that, having been so happy with my dear husband, I ought not to complain; and I don't. I only want to be rid of this tiresome *combat* called life. . . .

The reading of my letters fills my soul with remorse. I did not do half what I ought, and my long absences are so much stolen from the happy past. But I will not enter into the dark corners of my mind.

To Princess Batthyany.

June 13, 1878.

DEAR FRIEND,

It is almost a month since I have been intending to write to you a very reproachful letter for letting me know of your

departure only when it was too late to go and see you, for you were gone. To my surprise a letter came to announce it, and also a printed paper of what appears to me a particularly ingenious way of doing good to some poor children. You may think it queer that I should be all this time before I wrote to tell you all my regrets at your unexpected departure and my sorrow for it, and I am quite ready to agree it was very odd, and to beg your indulgence; but since I have lost the prop and stay of my life, I really believe some part of my reason has been annihilated, for I am constantly doing the oddest things, which give me an appearance of either stupidity or indifference. Now, the first is quite deserved, but not the second. I really have lost part of my faculties in losing my dear, my incomparable husband; but, my dear friend, you have too much real kindness in your nature not to be indulgent to me when I tell you that the quickness of perception which prevented me from appearing negligent of my dear friends has quite left me. I am at times so absent that I am like another person, and as you have known me, I believe, for twenty-five years, I beg you to pardon and pity me. The great grief I have suffered has brought on these fits of absence which have made me lose two or three friends, but I think you have indulgence enough in your large heart to forgive, and sense enough to comprehend and make allowances for me.

Believe me, whatever I may do, to be your ever attached and faithful friend,

MARY MOHL.

June 27, 1878.

DEAR MINNIE,

Up to this day I had a sort of determination to go to Scotland to spend two or three months with my dear friend, Lady Clark. Her house is on the hill which borders the valley of the Dee. They had both been so kind in their persuasions, and I am so fond of them that I had quite determined. But I have at last taken courage and read letters of my dear husband for this last fortnight; I stumbled upon the packet of 1870–71, and was astounded to find how different his vivid descriptions are from the present remembrances, and how useful it would be to see the thing as it was then. You know his letters;* they are partly French, partly English, but all are

* Some of the letters referred to are published in Chapter XII.

alive. Now, I cannot help thinking it would be useful to truth to make them public. You are the best judge that I know on such matters. Do you think it would be advisable to print a certain number in one of the numerous periodicals? Could they remain as they are—some French, some English? Give me your opinion; you have, I believe, heard me read many of them in 1870, when I lived with you and the Clarks. He was here during the Commune; also he crossed the Rhine to take my niece's boy home, not choosing to trust him to chance, just when the French declared their hostility to Berlin. He found Grammont, the French envoy, at Stuttgart, who told him war was declared. *Now* the French declare that the Germans began. As it all comes naturally, it is the best history I know of the state of things just then.

A natural consequence of this resolution is a total change in all my plans. I renounce going to Scotland, and must stay here. I have another advantage in not going; I shall have time here to see you, if you will come to this great fair. It is an exhibition *monstre*, and I privately think it will be the last that will ever take place.

Send me an answer about the letters. You could refer to Arthur Stanley and many others as to the qualities of my husband's letters.

Yours ever,

M. MOHL.

The heat drove her out of Paris, and the following letter is in answer to one from me, reproaching her for not letting me know when she passed through London. It shows how much she disliked the idea of being looked after.

Cold Overton, 1878.

. . . I don't wonder you are angry with me. The case was this. I started with the idea of remaining at least a week in London, and, of course, going to see you, and I started suddenly because I found a lady and her husband, nice people, who were willing that I should join them, and it was not convenient just then for either of my nieces to come and travel back with me, so that my setting off was hurried and unprepared. I arrived at 6 p.m. at the Victoria Station. It was near to Flo. I had written only to her that I would come, telling

her to hire me a room. She had found none, and gave me her own. This was a great vexation to me; but I was so dead with fatigue that I could not fret, and could only go to bed. Next morning I was prepared to hunt for quarters when some one arrived. It was a niece from Sussex. "Good Lord, what shall I do with you? I am staying at an invalid's. Why did you come?" "Oh, to take care of you." "But I've nowhere to put you." "Well, I'll go back." Half an hour after—rat-tat—another niece come from Leicestershire, a hundred miles off. "Good Lord, what have you come for?" "Why, to be with you and take care of you." "Good Lord, I have no room for you!" It was too late to go back a hundred miles. Before this second calamity I had just had time to call on a friend a few doors off, who said she would give me a room; but she had but one to spare. I was in perfect despair; I could not stow the two nieces, and the night I had spent filled me with remorse for putting Flo out of her bed. I was ready to wring my hands, and in a fit of despair I said, "I'll go down to Cold Overton to-morrow, for this is unendurable," but it was too late; so another room was found at the top of the house. I am quite determined to keep my arrival a dead secret henceforth. But can you imagine anything more provoking than to have every project and arrangement overturned by people's kindness?—for I could not send these girls hunting about after an hotel. A London hotel is my horror; besides, why should I go spending money at a hotel when I have plenty of friends ready and glad to receive me? The next time I come I shall not tell the date, or give one a fortnight later. I am still under the inconvenience of the whole affair. I'm grown very stupid; my spirits are quite gone. I am not the same person I was; it is all I can do to get on at all—to take a resolution, to exert myself in any way. I make a constant effort not to sit down and cry, and say I care for nothing; everything is a torment to me. It was in this state of total prostration that I have been obliged to decide on everything for months. My spirits, so high all my life, have quite left me; half the time I am only disposed to say, "Let me sit down and die, for everything is indifferent to me." When you think of that dear, kind friend lost for me, I'm sure you will only pity me, and owe me no grudge. Alas! I have not strength to bear it. I came here like a wounded bird, and just bear life as well as I can. Only one who knows what my husband

was—and very few know it—can understand how totally bereaved I am. Adieu.

Yours most gratefully and affectionately,

MARY MOHL.

To Lady Eastlake.

Stors, August 17, 1878.

DEAR, BEST OF FRIENDS,

I was talking of you yesterday, and M. Chevreux told me to say how glad he should be to see you at Stors, if you should be in France next summer. I may truly say they are now the best friends I have in France; their house is open to me and my nieces at all times.

I am reading over my husband's letters, and I am glad that I published his reports so immediately, for he mentions it often as a favourite intention for years back, which I had then scarcely observed. On reading over those letters, I am astonished that I was so unkind as to leave him every year three or four months. He governs himself, but I see how much he missed me. My sister, to whom I was greatly attached, lost her only daughter; I made a sort of inward vow that I would never spend a year without some months passed with her. My dear husband respected the feeling, and never complained; but now I see it. And then another thought strikes me. These letters, such a treasure to me, would never have been written but for these annual separations! Adieu, dear friend; excuse and forgive me for saying so much about myself.

October, 1878.

Since we have had any communication Max Müller has published his article, so long expected; it has more facts in it than any one else would have been able to put together, and the very similarity of their positions, both making their way in foreign lands, enabled him to do it better than others; in fact, I was well pleased with it. I have had one hundred copies printed, apart from the review, to send to friends.

We have all been demented here with the Exposition; I say *we* out of sociability, for I have been four times, and each time so tired that I vowed I would not go again. Now I will make a humble confession, viz.: the *produit de l'industrie* that most pleased and interested me, was a large glass sort of cage, full of Japanese fish;

whether they were the *produits de l'industrie ou de la nature*, I know not, but they were certainly alive, and more like living jewels than anything I could compare them to. I could not tear myself away from them; they are not to be described. Adieu, dearest, goodest friend.

M. Renan writes to me that a friend of his wishes to write a review of the "Shah Nameh" in a French review. The French have a much higher notion of the historical value of the great Eastern epic than the English, because Asia appears to them the first, vast nourisher of the first metaphysical race. The English look upon Asia as a country to send their daughters to get husbands. I never heard one of them talk of it with the sort of venerating superstition that fills the minds of the cultivated Germans and French. Even the cultivated English think more of it politically than as the birthplace of metaphysical ideas, as they do in the rest of Europe. Then the French are proud of having published, at their own expense, some of the earliest efforts of the human mind. Pray, have you ever read Bernier's Travels? He flourished in the days of Louis XIV., and lived long at the court of the great Mogul. There is a letter of the great Emperor Akbar, who had, I think, the finest mind that ever was on a throne. It is a very curious book, and such a mind as Akbar's could not have been the only one. Adieu, dear lady; I hope I don't *ennuyer* you with my frequent letters, for you are a great comfort to me.

December 1, 1878.

DEAREST MINNIE,

I am sure you must think me a horrid pig to be so long without writing, and so I am; but there are no pigs so bad as sick ones, nor no quadruped so bad as a sick biped. I have been very ill all the month of November. It's no use entering into particulars; besides, I forget half at least. I fell ill the week your dear aunt was here; nevertheless, we were the best friends imaginable, I am very fond of her, but whether I behaved well I know not. For the last three weeks I verily believe I have not behaved at all. I was in bed, or sitting opposite to the fire, looking at it, and beginning a letter to my sister eighteen times and never finishing it. I will try to enter into life again now. We are all here in a state of folly; the

country seems to me in a sort of lock-jaw, as far as a poor stupid, listless, half-dead animal like me can have any view at all. Barthélemy stayed two hours with me to-day talking of it, but I could only see the lock-jaw. To-morrow I will go out, for I'm a *leetle* better, and the lock-jaw state rather amuses me. I'll go to my notary for some money, and hear what he'll say. I'll go to Madame Say's. Meantime, I'm told you're publishing some journals of your father's; of course I'm most anxious to see them. I loved your father, and he loved me, though we never said so. Yet we were not at all like Viola, who never told her love (it's the prettiest thing in all Shakespeare). Tell me some news. I'm in despair about the poor Turks; I hate the Russians like poison. These politics give me a sort of feverish circulation. If I live another month, I intend to bite into life again. I'm afraid this vile fellow D'Israeli has no bowels. If I could shoot Gladstone to-morrow I would, if I was hung next day for it—I should not care a pin; but I'm such a poor honey I don't know how to fire a pistol. Write to me, but whatever you do don't be overwise in your answer, for that enrages me. My love to your husband. It's impossible to describe how unlike we are to each other, so we suit beautifully.

Midnight. If I keep this till to-morrow I shall read it, and of course shall not send it, so "va pour la poste." Amen.

Just as this book was going to press, I received the following interesting letter from Miss Emma Weston, Madame Mohl's American friend. In alluding to the mistaken notions formed of Madame Mohl by those who did not know her, she writes—

Shallow, superficial people have naturally remembered, and repeated whatever was "in harmony with their gift," as Emerson says. You and I know she was not at all the light-minded, trifling, unreflecting butterfly some people have represented. She had strong passions, strong prejudices, and strong affections. She never had the weakness of thinking every man in love with her. I first knew her intimately in 1850. I sat to her for my portrait, and I passed every day, and sometimes the evening also, alone with her for several months. In her last years she was not a superficial, worldly woman, suffering because the world had left her; she was a woman of strong affections,

suffering acutely because she had outlived almost all who were dearest to her. She could do without society, much as she loved it, and if Ida could have lived with her, she would have been as happy as the loss of M. Mohl would allow. Nobody who experienced as I did the warmth and fidelity of her affection will ever forget it.

I was either absent from Paris or greatly occupied as a *garde-malade* during the last three or four years of her life, but I saw her at intervals, and, with the exception of a loss of memory for *recent* events, she was entirely unchanged. During the last six months I was too ill to leave my room, which I shall ever regret.

Madame Mohl was constantly sending me the kindest invitations, and I felt as if I ought not to refuse them; but her nieces confirmed my belief that she was not equal to receiving visitors, for, from all I heard, she soon became so fatigued that she ceased to enjoy their company. I therefore went again, in the spring of 1879, to the Hôtel St. Romain, and spent with her, as before, some part of every day. Her society was as delightful and as *nourishing* as ever. We were not able to enjoy our favourite amusement—going together to the play, for she was not strong enough at that time; but soon after I left Paris, Mrs. Wynne Finch took her one evening when she was particularly well to the Français. As soon as they entered the box Madame Mohl looked round with childlike glee and exclaimed, "My dear, I could kiss the house!" She took off her bonnet, as she always did when she wanted to be thoroughly at her ease. When the principal actress came on, dressed in the scanty garments then in fashion, "Law," she exclaimed, "she's as naked as a needle!"

She had, fortunately, in her later years a friend under the same roof. In 1871, M. and Madame d'Abbadie (he is the celebrated Egyptian traveller, a member of the Institut, and a most distinguished man) took the second floor of 120, Rue du Bac. They proved a most valuable acquisition.

Madame d'Abbadie is full of kindness, intelligence, and originality, Madame Mohl delighted in her company, and when she was absent from Paris she used to write long letters "full of grace," as Madame Mohl used to say, when she read them aloud to me. After M. Mohl's death Madame d'Abbadie used to pay Madame Mohl a visit every evening at 9.30, when the dear old lady had had her nap, and was disposed, as usual, to talk till midnight. She used to send up to know if Madame Mohl was alone; if any one else was there she would not go in, consequently I did not often meet her while I was in Paris. "Certainly, the most devoted of my friends," as Madame Mohl wrote in 1877, "is Sophie Quirins." She came to see her every day, and frequently was sent for by her old friend at odd times. When she arrived Madame Mohl had generally forgotten what she wanted her for. "I suppose, my dear, I *ennuyéed* myself," she would say. When she urged, as she frequently did, Madame Quirins to come with her sister and live in the Rue du Bac, Madame Quirins always refused, saying, "You know, dear Madame Mohl, we should be too much for you; you would get tired of us." Her English nieces would have been only too glad to have taken it in turns to look after her, but as soon as she suspected that they were with her for *her* comfort, not for their own pleasure, she wearied of them, and they had to leave her to the care of her kind servants, who did their best, but who could not watch over her in the way that her age and increasing infirmities seemed to render necessary. Another constant friend was Mademoiselle de Tourguénieff, and of course there must have been many others whose names I do not know.

Mignet still survived, and Barthélemy St. Hilaire; Loménie died not long before my visit in 1879. But she took an increasing delight in M. Renan's conversation, and the Duc de Broglie never forgot her. Dr. de Mussy was a valued

friend as well as a kind physician, and she left him a picture in her will: her best picture, a Greuze, she left to our National Gallery.

Besides all these, her English friends never failed to visit her when they passed through Paris. A kind welcome always awaited those who went to see her, although she could not always remember who they were. By never contradicting her fancies, but by linking on the present to the past, she would gradually become clearer and talk with her old vivacity.

Another terrible blow fell on her this year in the death of her sister, Mrs. Frewen Turner. She wrote to Lady Derby—

June 3, 1879.

DEAREST LADY,

I do so wish to hear from you! But I am grown so modest that I have scarcely courage to write, thinking how little I am worth reading. Yet I hate modesty—it is like a hump on one's back; the less it is attended to the better, and those who have it ought to have the discretion not to give the slightest hint about it—and here is actually a whole page about it. But I want to know how you are, and where, and how the world of England wags. I am very unhappy about Sir Bartle Frere, who was a great friend of my husband's, and very kind indeed to me. I have lost my sister, my only sister, since you have had communication with me; I have been almost crushed to pieces by it. I am a little better, and I read all my dear husband's letters; they have so much rare and deep thought in them that I cannot help thinking they ought not to disappear. When I do hear from you tell me what you think of Sir Bartle Frere—has he been mistaken? The best and wisest are sometimes; and when one thinks of all the numerous ways of being mistaken in public life, our greatest wonder ought to be that it ever happens otherwise, with all the good-will in the world.

Pray, dear lady, preserve in a corner of your heart some of the kind feeling you have always had for me, and believe that I have valued it with all my heart and might. If I go to England this

summer—which is very doubtful—shall I have a chance of seeing you, and where?

Adieu. Whether I write or not, believe that I have always the deep feeling that I am understood and sympathized with by you, and am ever grateful, and it does me good.

June 20, ten o'clock.

DEAREST LADY,

For the first time I have taken up this very night the thick packet of letters written to me after my husband's death, of which I had only read those from dear friends. The very restricted intimate society I have kept up here is dispersed for the summer; I am more lonely than ever, and I am trying to sort my papers. I found a letter amongst others of yours, dear friend, which I read, no doubt, with many tears, dated January 8, 1876—so kind, so tender. I know I read it then, but just now it comes so fresh to me, like a cool leaf upon a smarting wound. You have a very rich heart, dear friend, and how you suffered at your brother's death! How I felt for you, though I did not venture to say much! It seems as if speech were too coarse at certain times, and like a brush upon a wound. Perhaps I am cruel to speak of it now, but I *did* so feel for you that I must tell you so once in my life. Perhaps I ought not to touch upon past sufferings. Forgive me, for I felt so for you, and it is so seldom one can *épancher* one's sympathies; a sort of troublesome thick veil seems thrust into the most sensitive part of one's soul, packing up each particular grief.

Pray tell me something about yourself. Are the politics tormenting or soothing just now? for I suspect they swing between those two extremes. Tell me what is thought by the wisest people. I hear that things are in a very ticklish way in India, and I think we are sidling into mischief, and if we are we shall not easily get out of it. But, to turn to nonsense, I hear you are all absolutely mad about a certain actress called Sarah Bernhardt, in whom vanity is certainly more robust than it has ever been even in the most sturdy personifications of that overpowering passion. I have often tried to find out by analyzing why these personifications are more abundant in France than elsewhere. Is vanity the most healthy and powerful passion among the most civilized or the less civilized? I can't tell you how often I have examined that point of natural

history till I was stupefied, and I have not been able to find it out. At the first glance it appears that the uncivilized must have less, but I don't assert this as a certain truism. Adieu, dear lady.

Yours ever,
M. MOHL.

To Lady Eastlake.

Paris, July, 1879.

DEAREST FRIEND,

I am going to London, I think, on Tuesday. I shall be at Mrs. Lushington's, but shall stay a very short time there. I go because I'm ill and can't eat, and it's possible that staying in the country may bring back the faculty. I have written to say I will go to my niece in the country. Perhaps you are not in town. Don't believe that I have not the same love, the same high esteem, the same trust in you, because I have not written; but I am like an old dried-up leaf blown about by the wind. I fall into a corner like a lost bit of rubbish; a gust comes, and all at once I am in the whirlwind. I do so want to see you; what I want is your compassion. I'm not worthy of much else. I will not write more until I know that you still take an interest in me.

Yours ever, ever, ever,
MARY MOHL.

To Lady Eastlake.

Wormstall, July, 1879.

Pray, dear friend, send me a line about your state of health and foot. I do so feel for you, but if your head still governs despotically your hand, I retract much of my pity. Consider the thousand legs and feet you have to govern your fellow-creatures with, by that hand covering a number of printed sheets, which we shall all read with *empressement*—which will lay eggs in many heads, and will turn out live ideas instead of live chickens in other people's heads. For instance, you wrote "Venice Defended" some years ago. I can't tell the number of times I have made use of it, and served up the chickens it produced in my head to people who by accident mentioned Venice. Keep your goodwill for me; it is a real charity, for fate has trodden on me with a heavy and nailed shoe. I feel as crushed as a poor mole under a ploughboy's foot; yet no one is to blame—it

is in the nature of things. I try to think of things in general and a little less of my own.

Wormstall, August, 1879.

DEAR MINNIE,

I left Paris July 23, came to London at nine at night, slept at my dear little B——'s sister's, came next morning here, and have been ever since with my niece, Selina Vickers—a very valuable, kind niece, who bears all my forgetfulness with kindness and indulgence for the sake of what I *have* been; for now, alas! I am a very poor creature, with no more reason than a cat that is choking (as the French say). Write and tell me where you are and what you do. The bother of the journey seems to have extinguished the little memory I had; it is as volatile as a fine perfume. Pray write immediately.—Yours ever,

M. M.

To Lady Eastlake.

Wormstall, August 13, 1879.

DEAR LADY,

I found here Kinglake's "Invasion of the Crimea," for the first time I have seen it, so I set to valorously, and am at the third volume. It seems to me a wonderful book; but I am not a wonderful person, and my poor head wants a guide-post sadly. I never shall cease regretting that I never met with it during my dear husband's life, as he could have led me through; but he never saw it, and I much regret it, for the man's feelings are all mine, and I understand many of them from my knowledge of the rascally *régime* of Louis Napoleon, which I fear the English will hardly believe. Do you know him—Kinglake, I mean? I did some years ago, and never shall cease regretting having lost sight of him; but I shall write to tell him that the reading his book is an event in my life. If he don't care I don't mind, and if he does I shall be glad he should know it.

We asked her to come to us at Bournemouth.

Wormstall, August, 1879.

DEAREST MINNIE,

I have received yours to-day too late for the post. I have been worrying myself to death because I can't go before Satur-

day. They will not let me go alone; and a gentleman in the house is going Saturday to his parish to preach on Sunday, and takes me as far as Lyndhurst, I cannot say they are wrong, for I am become such a poor creature since I have lost all that made life worth having; my memory is so gone I am not the same creature. Dear Minnie, don't expect it. When there was a question of my going alone to you a hue-and-cry was set up. I vowed I would go by myself in spite of cross-railroad, waiting, etc.; but they all agreed that the cross trains were too puzzling, and the clergyman in question being obliged to go Saturday it would be nothing to retard a day, so I agreed, hoping you also will think it wiser. Adieu till Saturday. I reach Bournemouth East at 7.5, according to your precious paper. *Au revoir donc.*

She came to us on August 27, and stayed till September 18, when we ourselves went away. She had the misfortune to lose her box on the road, we sent in all directions for it and pitied her extremely. "Ah, my dear!" she cried, "I should not care at all about it if only my hair would curl!"

She was too fragile to walk far, but she was very light and active. She used to trip out by herself on the terrace fronting the sea before our house at Bournemouth, which was too far east to be invaded by promenaders. One day a German band came, and we could see her from our windows dancing and curtsying and figuring away to the sound like a child of six. She must at that time have been eighty-six.

All her friends at Bournemouth were delighted to see her; even Sir Henry Taylor would toil up the hill to call upon her. She was still able to spend a day in the New Forest, and, as usual, she was full of life in the evening. We had a very large house, and it was full of people of all ages. The older members of the party used to play at whist, but she never touched a card. After she had had her nap she was ready to talk or to listen to music, and as charming as ever, for she never became in the least deaf.

To Lady Derby.

16, Great Queen Street, Westminster, S.W., 1879.

DEAREST LADY,

I have been in England these two months, but good for little, and principally at Bournemouth for sea-air. I had not courage to write, thinking you would be far off in the north country, in which direction I have ceased to go since my sister's death. Pray, dearest lady, let me hear from you; you will ever remain a bright light in my life. I knew you when all was happy and joyful around me; but you, you are a rare gem, and I know how to distinguish you from the uncountable multitude. It is a charitable act to let me see the luminary, even at a distance, in views few and far between.

Adieu, dear lady; you will ever have one human being who loves and never loses sight of you if ever so far, ever so distant, ever so silent—that is me.

M. MOHL.

After her return home she wrote to Lady Eastlake—

November 1, 1879.

DEAR FRIEND,

We arrived safe last night at seven o'clock. I never came over so free from sea-sickness or discomfort. It is the same machine which brought me over to England; it is two boats pasted together. I may say that I have not seen or heard of anything half so successful.

Of course, it is an effort to settle down into one's habits and read and answer the innumerable letters, etc. I am sorry to say the weather is not a bit better than in London. I was joyously received by my two maids and one of the cats—the other cares for nobody. Alas! what a treat it was to return when my dear husband was here—so joyous to receive me, so amusing, so full of new matter! I sometimes wonder at myself for being able to live, and then I say to myself, "Ungrateful that I am; ought I not to be thankful for so many good years? How few have had so much happiness in their life! Have I a right to complain?" This silences my murmurs; but how hard it is to be just and reasonable!

Yours ever,

M. MOHL.

She asked my son to come and stay with her, but he was not able to do so, as he was at college.

Paris, December 2, 1879.

DEAREST MINNIE,

It is a pleasanter time for strangers to come here in January than in December, because you know what a fuss they make about the *jour de l'an*, and they put off their parties very willingly to that jovial time to kill more birds with one stone. Some have even the impudence to put off coming to Paris till after the *jour de l'an*, that they mayn't have so many *étrennes* to give. When I say *some*, I could say more than half the poople.

My dear husband's first volume is printed, but the second will take about three weeks. It is all his annual reviews for twenty-seven years of what the Oriental Society in France had done for Oriental science and literature while he was secretary. He has made quite a creation of what I had expected would be a dull nomenclature. The second volume is in the press.

I am afraid poor A—— made a sad mistake; people always do when they marry a man much older than themselves.* He's always selfish—I have seen no exceptions. When a man has reached fifty or thereabouts in bachelorhood, his habits of selfishness are quite fixed, and nothing can exceed the folly of supposing any love possible in the world will counteract fifty years of bachelor selfishness—unless, indeed, he has been twenty years in love with the same person, and been accustomed to sacrifice all his whims to that person. But these are exceptional cases. Don't let your daughters marry men much older than themselves, unless they are very old and going to die. That's a different sort of calculation. I am very sorry for poor A——. If I were her, I would try and grow worldly and build my life up in that way; but it's only a makeshift, after all. Alas! my marriage was so wonderfully happy to me, and I cared so little for the world and its vanities, that it appears a terrible come-down to have to make one's self content in that way; but it is wiser to make the best of it, as one must live on with half-and-half companionship. I fear in such a case I should have taken some ratsbane, but I don't advise it to others; and the fact is, I should never have tumbled

* The marriage alluded to turned out very well, in spite of Madame Mohl's forebodings.

into such a case. Marriage was always to my imagination everything or nothing (but that is not common), and when it is broken life is broken too for ever.

January 8, 1880.

You must have been astonished not to have heard of me all this time. The fact is, I have been so ill the last three weeks, and so hoping every day to get better, that I put off writing with that expectation. The frost last month nearly killed me, and I dare say you have had enough of it. There has not been such a winter since 1789, which I have heard my granny often talk of during my childhood, because her spouse, Captain Hay (the first and greatest sea captain that ever was), was living on dry land then with his family, and was the only person capable of banging and unfreezing certain legs of mutton, made so awfully hard by that great frost. What long descriptions I have heard of that winter; and this winter, I hear heaps of people say, is the worst that has been heard of since. On the 17th of last December I wrote to my wood-merchant for wood, and it is my habit to have it sent in a quantity sufficient for a month; but his answer was that he could send me none till December 29. I was nearly at my last log. Judge of my horror! for coals, which I dislike, but asked for, were just in the same case, no more abundant, not get-at-able, for they all come to Paris by water, and all the rivers were frozen. The fact is, there are four great rivers that do half the manual labour in France, and as they don't eat as horses and men do, it is one of the reasons why France is the richest country in Europe—if you take in that they are all navigable, and that there are vast tracts of country through which they go majestically along for nothing except paying the few who man the barges. Besides which, they have smaller rivers which communicate; and if you consider that France has the Mediterranean, the Western Ocean, and the Manche, which can all thus communicate chiefly by water, you can see at a glance the great use these powerful servants render to the nation almost without wages. If labour is riches—which is an axiom in political economy—how much more so when the labourers don't eat! Now, these worthy labourers could do nothing when frozen, and wood and coals all come from a great distance. You may judge the discomfort and misery to the poor in Paris, so that the thaw was hailed as the

greatest of mercies; but even that was almost a calamity, for the enormous masses of ice brought down by the sudden thaw broke down the Pont des Invalides, besides every bridge being injured in a less degree. I shall never cease regretting I did not go down the street to see it. Every one says it was awfully grand to see these masses sailing rapidly down and knocking down every obstacle; but I was so poorly I could not go. Those who went say that on the bridge you felt the strange delusion that the bridge was sailing down, and the rivers and the barges were all standing still. I believe it is coming back, for there is a hard white frost all over the garden. It will be all snow and ice. Kindest remembrance to your spouse and children, and pity me if I have a second bout of this horrible weather. I believe I shall die of it.

To Lady Eastlake.

January 12, 1880.

DEAR FRIEND,

I have been intending to write I do not know how long, but the intense cold has almost killed me, and the last twelve days have not been too much to thaw me; beside which, wood and coal were so dear that one felt on the road to ruin when one had a good fire, because, forsooth, all the fuel burnt in Paris comes on the backs of the noble-minded industrious rivers, which cost France nothing (at least one way), when they march majestically to the sea, so that the Mediterranean, the Bay of Biscay, the Manche, and the Rhine are in connection, and bring one fuel. Water is *our* servant, fire is *yours*; but fire is a gormandizing servant, water is humble and sober.

A fortnight ago, when the thaw began, all Paris went to see the Seine caracoling like an overfed horse. The icebergs rushed along like mad, broke the bridges; the Pont des Invalides has lost the three middle arches. The people would go down to see it close, and got drowned—no end to the mischief. I was so ill with cold I could not go. I would have given anything to see the icebergs rushing along. I trust you may have a milder time; still it was worth seeing, if fuel were not as dear as gold.

Pray, dear friend, tell me when you'll come. If I can get one or two people to meet you, it will be worth while. A very agreeable lady, named Mrs. Tennant, has been here; do you know her? I

wish particularly to re-find Mr. Kinglake, whom I knew well long ago. Would you try to send the enclosed to him?

Yours most affectionately,

M. MOHL.

March 1, 1880.

DEAR MISS WYSE,

Oh, oh, oh, what a handwriting! I have been half an hour making it out, though it's not worse than others. There's not a nation in Europe writes so badly as the English; now, it is not worthy of so sensible a nation, who values time.

The dean has just sent me a most charming book he has been writing—the portrait of his father. What a delightful man he must have been! I'm quite in love with him.

I'm very impatient for my niece Ida to come, as I want to write all my dispositions, because I have a notion I shall not go on above a year or two more, and I want to make all my arrangements about my will; she, of all the family, is the one I shall leave in charge of what I call my under-arrangements. I have many precious things to dispose of which I wish to leave to this or that friend.

I have been out of all patience about my husband's book. I particularly wish both volumes to come out before the London season is over, for this reason—the second volume is mostly on India. Her ancient civilization, her profound ideas, and the quantity of study and learning the Anglo-Indians have spent upon India, almost fill the volume. Now, no one before has been able to give an account of what the English have done to fathom the ancient civilization of India. It has been the most difficult and curious part of all my husband's studies, and he has given all his attention to it, therefore what has been done by the numerous deep-searching Englishmen who have been employing their intellect in examining the past history and civilization of the Sanscrit-speaking race has been searched into by my husband, and shown to the public in this book. I should, therefore, wish it to come out before the men he speaks of have left London, for many of them would be glad to see their names proclaimed to Europe, for it is an European book; and, as I have one foot in the grave, I should like to hear my husband's profound researches and sharp intellect appreciated by my countrymen. The book's title is "Vingt-sept ans d'études Orientales." I don't

think there exists any book in Europe that can interest Anglo-Indian students so much. As to its being a stock book by-and-by I have no doubt, but I should just wish to have a taste of its success before I die. Of course I do not expect it to be read like a Dickens novel, but I hope for the sort of success such a book can have. I shall go to England, I suppose, in the summer; I have three places in London where I am sure of a welcome. How glad I should be if some good fortune threw me into company with your delightful host;* but he will not be in London, I fear. Will you ask him if he ever read a book by the Princess Belgiojoso about Syria? She speaks of the Turkish peasants in Syria as the finest race of men. The book is very clever; I shall bring it to England. It is full of originality and profound observation. Adieu.

MARY MOHL.

To Lady Eastlake.

I read your book † with great pleasure within twenty-four hours of its arrival. I suppose it was a sort of filial respect that made you dress it so well, but I do assure you it is quite worthy of being printed on common paper, for it is full of life; and I only wish some *avant-propos* had been written, to give some idea of the efforts that had been making for the last fifteen years at least to amend the innumerable bad institutions and abuses that preceded the Revolution. No single, or even a good many books, will do justice to the general up-heaving there was in all the high-minded and civilized people to correct the absurd state of things that had been slowly brought on by a hundred years of darkness. But I suspect it was not only in France, but that all over Europe, a general overturn was wanted. Poor France led the way, with her usual ardour after new things. She had been just as impetuous and violent five hundred years before about the Crusades.

I have just seen Madame Say, who is preparing to set off. I rejoice much at Say's nomination, because he will do all he can to make things smooth. His having the charge of the commerce treaty is a wonderfully good thing, he being so fond of the union of the

* Lord Stratford de Redcliffe.

† Dr. Rigby's "Letters during the Revolution of 1789."

two nations. Their going will be an additional temptation to me to go. Adieu, dear lady.

Yours ever,
M. MOHL.

Paris, May 7, 1880.

I have this moment received yours of the 6th, and hasten to tell you of a new turn in my projects. I am going to England on June 1. My niece Ida is willing to go with me, and an old friend of hers wishes to see her above all things. This friend wants me to go to her too, and though I did not intend leaving till July, I have altered all my plans, and shall be in London on June 1.

I am so glad you like Madame de Rémusat's book. I could not lay it down. It is so much the more valuable, that she had been fond of the man in the beginning, and was so very young when she enterd the *gouffre*. It has confirmed all my ancient opinions and judgments about Bonaparte, which might have been those of a blind person feeling with his hands the features he can't know with his eyes, who all at once sees all the individual parts he had suspected. It is wonderful that it has preserved so much truth, being written after she had destroyed the first in a fit of terror, and I think her grandson has done one of the greatest services that could be done in publishing it; but he has been much abused for it, and the reason given is "qu'il ne faut pas dire du mal de ses maîtres." So a reputation is to be bought, body and soul—pretty morality!

I am, of course, very ignorant as to the politics in England. I have a certain tendency towards disliking the Radicals, and all I can do is to make up for it by *not* liking the Conservatives *much;* and yet I am extremely interested in all my country's politics, and in their doing what is right. So you may guess how very doubtful I am, and especially how few friends I can side with, always finding them both wrong and right at times; so I abstain from talking, for fear of quarrelling with all I see.

Ever yours most affectionately,
M. MOHL.

To Miss Wyse.

May 7, 1880.

Ida is perfectly delighted at this unexpected treat of going to England, and, in fact, I am not sorry, although going at an election

time is a horrid bore when one don't take an impassioned interest in politics, which I do not, because, though I cannot abide Gladstone, I am not at all sure that I have an unlimited faith in D'Israeli either; and the worst of English politics is that you must believe in the important head of the party, whatever you may think of the individual, and of the plans and views and conduct of the said head. The *man*—the *man*—is all, and I have very little worship for either of them. Neither do I care a button for the odd whim they have in England for the faculty of pouring out words as a waterfall pours out water, whether the subject is worth it or not. I can't think that a man, who published a whole book to prove that the "Iliad" is another version of the Gospel, can be a sensible man; and an owner of good sense in managing the *ménage* of a nation must be more useful than all the eloquence that has drowned the common sense of the English nation for a hundred years. However, I won't bother you with my notions. I write to say that I go to London on June 1 to Mrs. Walter Bagehot's. Pray write a note to tell me where you are to be found.

Believe me yours ever,

M. MOHL.

To Lady Derby.

May 20, 1880.

DEAREST LADY,

I was delighted to get your last letter, May 19; so kind after a long apparent silence. I found your former lost letter amongst many others, unopened. I must have been absent when it came, and they were all tied up together. I shall be in London 1st or 2nd June, and shall be glad beyond measure to see you.

Madame Say will, I think, be much liked in England. She is very, very sensible, perfectly unpretending, and has the sort of mind which I should think ought to be the most appreciated in England, only they like flash and show-off in foreigners, which she disdains; but her style of conversation is remarkably perfect, which is perhaps scarcely appreciated in England. It stands very high here. She was a daughter of Bertin, who, it was said, governed all France under the first return of Louis XVIII. It was especially the best time here after Bonaparte's fall. Bertin established the *Journal des Débats*, and was looked upon as one of the causes or

helpers of the sudden prosperity that came on after the extinguishing of the Bonapartes. In the first years after the return of the Bourbons, France produced a new crop of writers. Louis Napoleon's reign put a large extinguisher on the whole. I don't think they have any idea in England of these different phases which successively threw light and shade over the fifty years that succeeded the empire, but they are well remembered here. I have read lately an English book, a sort of history of England and all its curious changes, by an Irishman, called Justin McCarthy, which is called a "History of our Own Time." I don't say I agree with all, but it has taught me a great deal. I wonder what is thought of it in England? I lent it here to several good thinkers, who were much struck with it. I don't know whether I am right or wrong, but it seems to me Gladstone's reviving again must be very bad for the nation. I have read little of his politics, but his other books seem to me so absurd that he can't have a just idea upon anything in his head. As to the fuss they make about eloquence, or what they call such, I think that humbug. You might as well marry a woman for the flash of her petticoat. It's the thinking, not the talking, that ought to make a minister. But my paper is at an end, to your great luck, so I can preach no more heresies.

Yours ever,

MARY MOHL.

She came with Madame von Schmidt to Mrs. Bagehot's, but her failing memory spoiled much of her pleasure in seeing her friends. She would say sometimes, when even an old friend had been talking to her, "My dear, who is that lady? I cannot recollect her name, although I know her face like my pocket." Nevertheless, when we went with a party (Mrs. Bagehot, Mrs. Barrington, and the Says) over Holland House, she showed more historical knowledge and intelligent interest than any of us, and charmed and astonished the guide, who charmed her in turn with the story of the ghost who is said to appear when any of the family is about to die.

Her memory for the past never failed her. I was told by Madame d'Abbadie that she went with her quite at the end

of her life to a gallery of engravings, representing scenes of the great Revolution and the Empire: she took a little stool and sat on it in front of all the pictures in succession, and her companion said that nothing could be more lucid and more interesting than her comments and recollections.

From London she went to stay with her nieces in the country.

We spent this summer at Canterbury, and invited Madame Mohl to stay with us. She would have enjoyed it very much, for Dean Stanley introduced us to the very agreeable society in the precincts, where she would have been much appreciated.

Wormstall, October 21, 1880.

DEAREST MINNIE,

Many thanks for your kind letter and invitation, but I must go to my business, or, rather, my dear husband's business. I am glad not to return sooner, as I much dread the solitude of Paris, but I suppose it will begin filling early in November. I have found here Macaulay's "Life," by Trevelyan. Have you read it? I want to borrow it from you, or I must beg it from here.

It would be difficult to express the total prostration of animal spirits I labour under, and what a poor creature I am become. Pray write a line or two.

Paris, December 2, 1880.

I have been very poorly the last two months, which threw cold water on my epistolary ardour; but I hope to have more spirit and be more industrious as I am getting better. If you had a mind for a trip to Paris, I should be able to go to the play with you, and give you what comfort the house affords, with a large view of beanstalks from the window. You have no idea of the active borrowing which goes on, thanks to your kindness in sending me the conversations of the French people,* who, however they may pretend to have so much modesty in printing their talk, are extremely glad to read it when it is printed. I hope you are all going on well after your *séjour* in a prim ecclesiastical town, which seems to have

* Senior's "Conversations with Thiers, Guizot," etc.

much of the sedate *agrément* of a cathedral. Thank you for your entertaining account of it.

M. M.

In the spring of 1881 Mrs. Bagehot spent some time with her old friend in the Rue du Bac. She wrote to Lady Eastlake on March 5—

Dear Madame Mohl is better than when she came to England, and her society is very enjoyable when she does not fatigue herself. She is equal to very little going out, and cannot entertain except in the way of calls. I wish more people would come, but she has offended a great many by forgetting to return visits. Still people should remember what being eighty-eight means.

She offended people also by not remembering who they were when they called, and to no one was this failure such a distress as to herself.

April, 1881.

DEAREST MINNIE,

I feel the *décadence* in my mind as plainly as in my body. I have as much judgment as ever I had in my life; but half our faculties are the children of memory. Every day I see clearer the depth of the words of the wise Greeks, they make the Muses, the daughters of Jupiter and of *Mnemosyne*, the memory. How true! Our mind is almost like a bodily faculty; it wants legs and arms. Memory is the legs of our mind; it unites us to the earth we live upon—my other faculties are all sharp still. To unite ideas as they fly, to turn two or three facts into an idea, is so easily done if the faithful servant is at hand who is to bring the ideas together and put them into cages; but if he should be lame, and not able to put them together so as to form a new whole, the creative power is stopped. Every day I find letters and papers that would furnish volumes, but the muscles of my mind are gone.

The management of the ample income left entirely to her by M. Mohl was another source of perpetual worry. She had never been accustomed to business of this kind, and she had been obliged in early days to practise strict economy. One

of her maxims was, "An empty bag cannot stand upright." She could not believe that the bag now was so full that there was no danger of its emptying, and she did not allow herself all the comforts—such as a carriage, a servant to accompany her out of doors—which she required.

It was a constant source of terror to her friends that she might be run over; and how she escaped is a marvel, for more than once she was found almost fainting, quite alone, in the street. Yet she gave money freely to those who wanted it. Madame Renan says she was *surtout charitable;* but she never could bear to allude to her charities, or to let her left hand know what her right hand gave.

She became very tired of the summer in Paris. It was the year when we lost Dean Stanley, and I wrote to tell her of his death. I feared the effect which the loss of so dear a friend might have upon her; but she had come to regard death no longer as an enemy, but as a deliverer. She replied—

July 20, 1881.

DEAR MINNIE,

What a happy death the dean's !—no illness, no infirmity, life pleasant to the last, his death as good as his life. I have known no man with so good a life as a whole, and such an easy death.

I have been absolutely roasted alive here, but had not courage to go because I did not know what to do. I have no home in England now my sister is gone; friends are kind, but one ain't sure one is not in their way. It was very different to go to relations who were so fond of one, though they trimmed one. Alas ! my poor sister was a great pleasure and comfort to me. Adieu; thank you with all my heart for your letter; it was a great pleasure to see your hand once more; thank you intensely for it. I assure you it was a great, I don't say pleasure, because death don't allow the word, but satisfaction to see your hand; and I can't regret the dean's death, it is so very kind of Providence to have taken him thus. Pray let me hear from you soon; I may go or I may not. I am a poor creature, but

I run about, and am as alert as ever. Love to all, and especially to your husband; he is a great favourite.

Yours most lovingly,
MARY MOHL.

I begged her to come to us, and she accepted with great pleasure.

Thanks, many thanks, for receiving me joyfully. I find I can hardly get off by Tuesday, I'm such a poor honey for hurrying. I think I must put it off till Wednesday, for if I get into what my granny used to call a tantivy, I'm done for. . . . I am doing a bold thing, going without a maid. I quite forget what I did last year; in fact, since my dear husband's death my memory seems melted away. Thank you much for your several bits of letters, showing me your goodwill. I humbly trust this change of my day will not put you to inconvenience; it is better than my arriving knocked up. Adieu. Yours ever obliged.

When Madame von Schmidt heard of her aunt's proposed journey, she wrote to me entreating me to prevent it, as she did not think Madame Mohl equal to the effort. I answered that I could not find it in my heart to do so, lest my dear old friend should think I did not want her. So Madame von Schmidt set everything aside, and travelled night and day to Paris, where her aunt was anything but pleased at the idea of giving up her trip. I invited Madame von Schmidt to come likewise, but she could not spare the time, and ultimately persuaded Madame Mohl to return with her to Klagenfurt.

Paris, Monday, 1881.

I was rejoicing at the idea of getting rid of my dreadful overdone state of nerves by leaving this oven of a place, when lump comes Ida from the mountains of Hungary to make me a surprise! I was rejoicing in the idea of going to you, and this last week I was looking to the end as if I was going to Paradise in England. Judge of my horror, which I was obliged to conceal. The poor thing had been upwards of forty hours in a diligence, and was so delighted with what

she had done to make me a surprise! I must either stay here—of which I am absolutely sick—or take her to England. I am afraid, dear Minnie, I must take her to you on Wednesday. She has plenty of friends in England who would be glad to see her. Ida is a great favourite in England, and if it had not been for the mania of surprising it could have been arranged. I'm in a dreadful fuss.

M. MOHL.

In the following year she came to us with her niece Eleanor. She had now entered her ninetieth year, and her loss of memory and increased restlessness had become very painful. She would start up several times a day saying she must write to M. Mohl, forgetting that he was dead. She was longing to die herself. She could not even understand what she read. From the touching account in the little book already so often referred to of Chateaubriand's last years, we may judge how much she suffered from the consciousness of her state. "There was no want of ordinary sense, but the power of thinking was completely gone. He could not read a line nor follow up an idea in conversation." For a long time past the editor of the *Nineteenth Century* had sent his magazine to her regularly, and she valued his kindness so highly that she always took pleasure in reading it even when she could not understand it. During this last visit she generally sat with it in her hand, and would read over and over again the same page, and reiterate her gratitude for Mr. Knowles's constant remembrance. From us she went into the country, where she became still more unhappy and restless, and returned to Paris for the last time in September, 1882. She then forgot that she had ever been away, also that I wrote to her frequently all the winter. It was distressing beyond measure to me that she thought that I neglected her.

Paris, November, 1882.

DEAR MINNIE,

I have spent all my summer here, and sick enough I have been of it; but I kept fancying I was doing wisely in case there should be any reason, or papers of my dear husband's or friends, that might require my presence in Paris. I have seen none, and have stayed here for no particular use. Remember, dear Minnie, if ever you have a whim for coming, I shall be too happy to give you a room and all the attentions I can. This letter will be taken by my niece, Eleanor Martin, who has been staying a month with me. I don't think she will have time to see you, but I tell her to leave this in London, with her address in the country for you, in case you have anything to say, though of course I shall answer you if you write to me. I have spent a long summer here, fancying I might be wanted. If anything was useful for my dear husband's memory of course I shall be too glad. If you will write me a line of friendly recollection; it is so long since I have heard from you, and I am at the same place.

I never spent an autumn in Paris before. Pray write me a letter, if ever so short—I have had none from you for so long; and if you have any fancy to come and see me I have plenty of room, and hope you will write to me without the smallest ceremony. Adieu. Pray, pray write to me, if ever so short; it is so long since I heard from you. I cannot express how much I wish it.

Most affectionately yours ever,

MARY MOHL.

I was so much touched by Madame Mohl's letter that I resolved to go to my old quarters in Paris as early as possible, but I was detained by the fatal illness of my mother, and three weeks afterwards my dear old friend likewise passed away.

Madame d'Abbadie was, unfortunately, absent during part of this winter, but Mrs. Wynne Finch never allowed many days to pass without spending with her some hours, and these were the evening hours when Madame Mohl was the brightest. She would keep this dear friend with her till

past midnight, calling out to the cook, Fillie, "Amusez bien le domestique," so that his mistress might not be in a hurry to go away. Mr. Guy Lestrange. (Mrs. Wynne Finch's son) was also a great favourite, both for his own sake and for that of M. Mohl, who was extremely fond of him, and with whom he had the link of an equal interest in Oriental studies.

Her faithful friend Madame Quirins writes—

> She read a great deal, lying on her sofa with her lamp on a small table beside her; she would read thus until twelve o'clock without her eyesight suffering in the least, indeed latterly without needing spectacles. The winter before her death she took up Walter Scott, reading over and over again "Ivanhoe" and "Old Mortality" with renewed pleasure; also a work by Mr. Walter Bagehot. I took her a *Quarterly Review* with a notice of Fanny Kemble's "Reminiscences," which she enjoyed highly, and also read over and over again. Her memory was as vivid as ever when she went back to the past, and I spent many an hour listening to her stories of younger days. It was a perfect panorama.

Dr. McKay, the clergyman of the English Church in the Avenue Marbœuf, visited her very often by her desire. "Of Dr. McKay's great kindness," Madame Quirins writes, "in the midst of his numerous occupations, too much cannot be said."

On Friday, May 11, she was as well as usual, and M. Barthélemy St. Hilaire dined with her, as he had on every Friday throughout the winter.

Early on the following day she had a fainting fit, to which she had for years been subject, and Madame d'Abbadie sent for Mademoiselle de Tourguénieff. She was very weak, and breathing with difficulty. Mademoiselle de Tourguénieff and Madame d'Abbadie were the only persons with her. They remained during the whole day. Madame d'Abbadie, who is an ardent Catholic, put a crucifix into the hands of her old

friend, who clasped it fervently. Then Madame d'Abbadie offered up short prayers at intervals.

Mademoiselle de Tourguénieff sent for Dr. McKay, but Madame Mohl, who did not realize her danger, objected to seeing him while she was in bed. "But above all, my dear," she said to Mademoiselle de Tourguénieff, "I wish to be civil to him."

Mrs. Wynne Finch had gone to London, and Madame Quirins was in the country, but a telegram from Madame d'Abbadie summoned the latter. When she arrived "it seemed," she said, "as if her dear old friend could not live through the night." On being asked if she recognized *cette dame*, "Pardie, si je la connais!" Madame Mohl replied. On the Sunday she lay quiet, often asleep, but quite conscious, and on the following day appeared to be so much better that the doctor *almost* gave hope of her recovery. Her favourite cat, a beautiful white Angora, jumped on her bed, and she said, in her old funny way, to Mademoiselle de Tourguénieff, "Il est si distingué, sa femme ne l'est pas du tout, mais il ne s'en aperçoit pas, il est comme beaucoup d'hommes en cela." *

Towards morning a change took place for the worse. She knew her state, and asked pardon of her servants † and those around her for any act of unkindness on her part. Dr. McKay was again summoned; he came and knelt by the bedside, and read the prayers for the dying. Madame von Schmidt (who arrived after forty-eight hours' travelling), Madame Quirins, Mademoiselle de Tourguénieff, Madame

* Madame Mohl doted on this cat, and he only really cared for his mistress, though he was polite to others. After her death, Madame Quirins, who could not take him home on account of her birds, found him a comfortable situation where he seemed very happy; but at the end of a year he took himself off, and every one was in great distress about him. It was found that he had fixed himself in a Bonapartist family, having, very ungratefully, changed his politics.

† Her servants were all devoted to her. Julie, the heroine of the siege and Commune, lived with her for twenty years, and was succeeded by Fillie, who remained till her death.

Delaroche, the two servants, all—whether Catholic or Protestant, knelt round their old friend.

After Dr. McKay left she seemed to revive for a moment, and spoke in English, but so low that the words could not be heard. Madame Quirins leant over her and asked her what she said, and "those who stood around," Madame von Schmidt writes, "will never forget the plaintive, childlike tone in which she whispered, 'I want to die, to go to heaven. God bless you!'" These were the last words she spoke. Some of those present went away, but Madame von Schmidt and Madame Quirins on one side of the bed, and Mademoiselle Tourguénieff and Madame d'Abbadie on the other, remained watching and praying, and the end came without a pang. There was no more breathing; that was all.

The funeral took place on the Friday. The arrangements were similar to those for M. Mohl, with the exception that the religious ceremony took place in the church, in accordance with Madame Mohl's expressed desire, instead of at the house. So tender were her friends of her wishes that they would not mention her age in the "lettres de faire part," nor have the date of her birth engraved on her coffin. Consequently she has been thought older than she really was, for she had not completed her ninetieth year at the time of her death.

My brother and I (Mademoiselle de Tourguénieff writes) went to the house, and the prayers there were most touching. The coffin was loaded with flowers. A great many people were there. MM. St. Hilaire, Mignet, Viel Castel, Duvergier de Hauranne, Boissier, Delisle, Edward Dicey, the Duc de Broglie, the Renans, the Barthelots, the D'Abbadies, the Laugels, the De Thurys, M. Régnier, M. Lardy (the Swiss minister), Mrs. Lee Childe, etc. This last meeting of dear familiar faces round the dear old friend who had so long been a centre was very striking, the more so as it happened to be a Friday.

The Léon Says, my mother, Dr. McKay, and others, waited in the Protestant church in the Rue de Grenelle, where, by Madame Mohl's particular desire, expressed some time before her death, the service was read. The *pasteur*, M. Paumier, pronounced a funeral oration, which was very interesting.

Her nephew, Mr. Charles Martin, and her nieces, Madame von Schmidt Zabierow and Madame Helmholtz, were the chief mourners, and many of those assembled followed their old friend to Père La Chaise, where she was at last laid at rest beside the husband—the almost lifelong companion—whom she had never ceased to mourn and to long to rejoin. M. Fauriel lies at a little distance. Madame Mohl chose the resting-place for herself and her husband in the same tomb.

Her life had become labour and sorrow to her, we could not wish it to be prolonged; yet it was with a pang of deep regret that we heard that she was gone for ever from this world which she had helped to make so bright to all around her, and that we should see her face no more.

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